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Ontario

Ministry
of
Education

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Ontario Schools

**Intermediate and
Senior Divisions
(Grades 7-12/OACs)**

**Program
and Diploma
Requirements**

1989

Revised Edition



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Introduction

The circular *Ontario Schools: Intermediate and Senior Divisions* (OSIS) sets out the goals, policies, and requirements that govern the program in the Intermediate and Senior Divisions of the schools of Ontario. It outlines the expectations of the Ministry of Education for programs in Grades 7 and 8 of the elementary schools and the grades of the secondary schools in the province, including the requirements for the awarding of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and the Certificate of Education.

OSIS builds on *Circular P1J1: The Formative Years*, which sets out the common framework of goals, aims, and learning opportunities to be developed through programs in the Primary and Junior Divisions of Ontario's elementary schools. These circulars reflect the policy of the province of Ontario that the program in the publicly supported educational system should be designed to provide the greatest possible opportunity for every student to develop as completely as possible his/her abilities and interests and to meet each student's special needs.

The broad goals of education for Ontario can be found in section 1.3 below. The Education Act and the regulations set out the responsibilities of teachers, principals, and supervisory officers regarding the use of circulars and curriculum guidelines issued by the Minister in the development of appropriate programs.

1. The School System

1.1 A Shared Responsibility

The identification and achievement of the goals of education are shared responsibilities of students, teachers, and parents. The major purpose of a school is to help each student develop his/her potential as an individual and as a contributing, responsible member of society who will think clearly, feel deeply, and act wisely. This purpose can be achieved when the school facilitates the intellectual, physical, social, cultural, emotional, and moral growth of each student and develops more fully the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes that each student brings to the school.

School programs should give emphasis to what the school is best equipped to do, namely, to contribute significantly to the fulfilment of the intellectual, physical, and social needs of the student. In addition, the school should co-operate with parents and guardians in facilitating the emotional, cultural, and moral development of the student.

Students, teachers, and parents must also recognize the uniqueness of each student, the dignity of work, and the satisfaction of achievement. In this way students of varying interests and abilities will take pride in their personal efforts.

1.2 Curriculum Priorities

The need to provide students with the experiences that will allow them to participate richly and wisely in the life of this province and this country can be met in different ways through various subject areas in the instructional program and through events and activities in the co-instructional program. It is considered appropriate, therefore, for each school to select its own program from amongst the various provincial guidelines and to develop its own courses of study based on these guidelines and on local curricula to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of the students in its community.

Secondary education is primarily directed to preparing young adolescents both to develop the independence they need to act as concerned and compassionate citizens and to continue on to postsecondary studies wherever they have the interest and capability to do so. In recent decades two additional tasks have grown in importance. The preparation of young people to enter the world of work equipped with the attitudes and skills that will make them productive and successful is an essential task that must complement the traditional functions of secondary education. As well, as a result of a variety of social changes, the need for schools to work along with parents to nurture students through the adolescent years has increased. The curriculum priorities of each school must reflect all of these tasks.

1.3 The Goals of Education

The Ministry of Education in Ontario strives to provide in the schools of the province equal opportunity for all. In its contribution to programs, personnel, facilities, and finances, the ministry has the overall purpose of helping individual learners to achieve their potential in physical, intellectual, emotional, social, cultural, and moral development. The goals of education, therefore, consist of *helping each student to:*

1. develop a responsiveness to the dynamic processes of learning

Processes of learning include observing, sensing, inquiring, creating, analysing, synthesizing, evaluating, and communicating. The dynamic aspect of these processes derives from their source in many instinctive human activities, their application to real-life experiences, and their systematic interrelation within the curriculum.

2. develop resourcefulness, adaptability, and creativity in learning and living

These attributes apply to modes of study and inquiry, to the management of personal affairs such as career plans and leisure activities, and to the ability to deal effectively with challenge and change.

3. acquire the basic knowledge and skills needed to comprehend and express ideas through words, numbers, and other symbols

Such knowledge and skills will assist the learner in applying rational and intuitive processes to the identification and solution of problems by:

- a) using language aptly as a means of communication and an instrument of thought;
- b) reading, listening, and viewing with comprehension and insight;
- c) understanding and using mathematical operations and concepts.

4. develop physical fitness and good health

Factors that contribute to fitness and good health include regular physical activity, an understanding of human biology and nutrition, the avoidance of health hazards, and concern for personal well-being.

5. gain satisfaction from participating and from sharing the participation of others in various forms of artistic expression

Artistic expression involves the clarification and restructuring of personal perception and experience. It is found in the visual arts, music, drama, and literature, as well as in other areas of the curriculum where both the expressive and receptive capabilities of the learner are being developed.

6. develop a feeling of self-worth

Self-worth is affected by internal and external influences. Internally it is fostered by realistic self-appraisal, confidence and conviction in the pursuit of excellence, self-discipline, and the satisfaction of achievement. Externally it is reinforced by encouragement, respect, and supportive evaluation.

7. develop an understanding of the role of the individual within the family and the role of the family within society

Within the family the individual shares responsibility, develops supportive relationships, and acquires values. Within society the family contributes to the stability and quality of a democratic way of life.

8. acquire skills that contribute to self-reliance in solving practical problems in everyday life

These skills relate to the skilful management of personal resources, effective participation in legal and civic transactions, the art of parenthood, responsible consumerism, the appropriate use of community agencies and services, the application of accident-prevention techniques, and a practical understanding of the basic technology of home maintenance.

9. develop a sense of personal responsibility in society at the local, national, and international levels

Awareness of personal responsibility in society grows out of knowledge and understanding of one's community, one's country, and the rest of the world. It is based on an understanding of social order, a respect for the law and the rights of others, and a concern for the quality of life at home and abroad.

10. develop esteem for the customs, cultures, and beliefs of a wide variety of societal groups

This goal is related to social concord and individual enrichment. In Canada it includes regard for:

- a) the Native peoples;
- b) the English and French founding peoples;
- c) multiculturalism;
- d) national identity and unity.

11. acquire skills and attitudes that will lead to satisfaction and productivity in the world of work

In addition to the appropriate academic, technical, and interpersonal skills, this goal relates to good work habits, flexibility, initiative, leadership, the ability to cope with stress, and regard for the dignity of work.

12. develop respect for the environment and a commitment to the wise use of resources

This goal relates to a knowledgeable concern for the quality of the environment, the careful use of natural resources, and the humane treatment of living things.

13. develop values related to personal, ethical, or religious beliefs and to the common welfare of society

Moral development in the school depends in part on a consideration of ethical principles and religious beliefs, a respect for the ideals held by others, and the identification of personal and societal values.

The preceding goals are not arranged in any hierarchical order, nor are they discrete categories from which a checklist should be made. The integrated nature of learning and the complex pattern of human development preclude such a sequential or fragmented approach. The translation of the goals into curriculum objectives, however, will undoubtedly result in sequences of learning appropriate to the particular levels and stages of development of the students for whom programs are being planned.

1.4 Interaction Between the School and the Community

To meet the needs of a wide variety of students, the school should attempt to extend its role beyond the provision of courses and programs. As a resource to the community generally and to its own students specifically, the school has an unrivalled opportunity to help young people explore the many dimensions of learning and living. It can assist them in the realization of their potential in various fields of endeavour and set them on the path to becoming mature, responsible, co-operative members of society. The sponsorship of co-instructional activities that reach out into the community should be encouraged. These activities may centre around athletic, cultural, moral, political, or social interests and may include service projects and special training sessions involving various community agencies as well as tours and visits into the community to gain and share learning experiences.

Through interaction with the community, students can be provided with many important learning experiences that involve such things as the following:

- the practice of self-discipline;
- the development of positive attitudes towards the rights of others;
- the demonstration of respect for other races, cultures, languages, and religions;
- the acquisition of knowledge about and sensitivity to the needs of young children, the disabled, and the elderly;
- the enjoyment of aesthetic pursuits and forms;
- the sensible use of leisure time and local recreational facilities;
- the prevention of pollution;
- the care of plants and animals in the community area;

- accident prevention at home, in the community, in athletics, and when travelling;
- the decision-making processes in the political and economic arenas;
- the judicious use of financial resources;
- physical fitness and, in particular, the appropriate medicinal use of drugs.

1.5 Individual Differences

It is a basic policy in the curriculum for Ontario that individual differences are to be accommodated to the greatest extent possible. Curriculum implementation must therefore involve careful and perceptive adaptation of courses and programs developed from curriculum guidelines, a constant awareness of standards, flexible organizational structures, and, for exceptional pupils, supportive special education programs and services.

Provision should be made for each student to relate to a teacher who can act as an adviser and to belong to a group. Students who share common courses may be grouped together for a part of the school day, while the balance of their timetables may be individualized. In this way they may be provided with both a sense of belonging and a sense of independence. Both attributes are important, particularly for exceptional pupils who may require advice and assistance related to their special needs.

Information regarding the school curriculum shall be provided to all students and their parents (see section 4.15). Advice should be given so that students may be enrolled in courses and programs that best suit their needs, interests, abilities, and goals. Students should participate in the decision-making process as they form personal educational goals, select courses, and plan for the best use of their time. Both students and their parents share with the school the responsibility for educational achievement in which the qualities of enthusiasm, self-discipline, and good judgement play important parts.

2. Programs and Services: Grades 7 to 12/OACs*

2.1 The Curriculum: Intermediate and Senior Divisions

It can be difficult for the teacher who must plan for the instruction of students with very different backgrounds, interests, skills, and needs to be attentive to the many perspectives that must affect curriculum planning. The assistance of the principal, particularly in the setting of priorities, is essential to this task. This section of the document describes the most significant elements that affect the design of programs authorized by specific curriculum guidelines.

Both in this circular and in curriculum guidelines, as well as in the plans of teachers, the focus in the Intermediate Division must be on the *integration* of the learning experiences designed for the student. In addition, the integration of the student into social groups, in ways that expand his/her sense of community and responsibility, is essential. As the student proceeds towards the Senior Division, the emphasis will gradually shift towards *preparation* for citizenship, employment, or further study. By the time the student is working at Senior Division studies it must be assumed that he/she will be taking considerable personal responsibility for integrating his/her own learning and preparing for life as an adult.

2.2 The Guidance Program

The guidance program is a vital and integral part of the total school curriculum. It is a composite of the school's instructional, counselling, consultation, co-ordination, and liaison activities that are planned and implemented to assist student orientation, program selection, and preparation for the next level of study or entry to the working world. Thus, the provision and maintenance of an effective guidance program is essential to all students.

Each school shall provide a guidance program that is planned and organized so as to assure students access to the learning experiences, personal assistance, and accurate information resources that they will need to make informed and thoughtful decisions. The successful guidance program will foster students' awareness and understanding of themselves and their relationships with others while it helps them clarify their educational options and career alternatives.

The principal elements of the province's policy with respect to the guidance program, as summarized from *Guidance, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1984*, are as follows:

- The guidance program shall be directed to all students in the Intermediate and Senior Divisions.
- The implementation of the guidance program shall be the responsibility of all school staff.
- The guidance program shall be developed both from the guidance guideline and an assessment of student, school, parent, and community needs.
- The guidance program's goals shall be achieved through instruction and counselling. Both modes are considered essential components of a complete school guidance program and a balance shall be maintained in the time allotted to each.
- Principals shall have a written guidance program on file in the school. This plan shall include:
 - a) the instruction, counselling, co-ordination, consultation, and liaison activities to be performed as part of the school guidance program;
 - b) a method of evaluating the effectiveness of the guidance program in meeting the current needs of students, teachers, parents, and the community.
- A minimum of twenty hours shall be allotted to the school guidance program in each of Grades 7 and 8.
- A maximum of three credits may be earned for courses developed from the guidance guideline.

Aims of the guidance program. The guidance program should provide students with opportunities to:

Grades 7 and 8

- develop a knowledge and understanding of the self;
- develop the skills needed to get along with others;
- develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to select appropriate secondary school courses and to cope with the transition from elementary to secondary school;

Grades 9 to 12/OACs

- expand their knowledge and understanding of the self and develop an appreciation of their individual potential to contribute to society;
- develop an understanding of effective relationships;
- develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to make appropriate post-secondary decisions and to cope with the transition from secondary school to postsecondary studies and the world of work;

- become aware of and explore career alternatives.
- explore potential careers in relation to themselves, educational alternatives, and their desired lifestyles.

These aims should be addressed throughout both the Intermediate and Senior Divisions. They should be achieved through:

- the thoughtful planning and implementation of instructional units appropriate to student age and grade levels;
- the provision of adequate opportunities for the counselling of students;
- consultation, co-ordination, and liaison activities that support instructional, counselling, student, staff, and community needs.

It is essential that the elementary and secondary school components of the guidance program be co-ordinated to establish program continuity, ensure that the program's content responds to the specific information needs of students, and facilitate student transition from one school to another.

Guidance programs must also provide for communication with postsecondary institutions, the community, industry, and employment centres in order to provide current and accurate information to meet the needs of students preparing to enter post-secondary education or the world of work.

2.3 Special Education Programs and Services

Universal access to education is fundamental to our society. Special education programs are designed to ensure access by exceptional pupils to an education based on the goals that underlie education for all students (see section 1.3).

The needs of an individual exceptional pupil are delineated by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee of the board. Five broad areas of exceptionality – behavioural, communicational, intellectual (including gifted), physical, and multiple – provide a preliminary understanding of the range of differences for which provision must be made.

Special education programs may be located in one or more of the following settings: the regular classroom, a resource setting, a self-contained class, or a special school. The setting or combination of settings should be carefully chosen so that the exceptional pupil can benefit from the school as a community.

Learning experiences must correspond with the pupil's needs, abilities, interests, and aspirations but may differ in content, process, product, and evaluation. Special education programs, therefore, will involve modifications to the kind, breadth, depth,

and pace of these experiences. In some cases these modifications may be relatively simple; in other cases they will be more extensive. The assistance of additional professional staff and the use of specialized equipment or facilities may be required.

The principal plays a critical role in encouraging the flexible organizational structures and the optimum use of school and community resources that a dynamic and stimulating special education program requires. It is the principal's responsibility to:

- ensure that the instruction of exceptional pupils is assigned to teachers who have an understanding of the special needs of the individual pupils and who have a willingness to meet the challenge of teaching these pupils by making appropriate instructional and organizational adjustments;
- ensure that specialized equipment, facilities, and a variety of teaching and learning strategies, suited to the needs of exceptional pupils, are employed to maximize the potential of the learning environment;
- ensure that the school is organized to provide opportunities for staff:
 - a) to meet regularly to discuss special education programs and develop new strategies to meet the changing needs of each exceptional pupil; and
 - b) to be available for consultation in moments of crisis;
- ensure that strategies for effective communication with parents are established;
- ensure the involvement of parents and resource persons within the board and within community agencies so that staff will be as fully cognizant as possible of each pupil's needs and be able to make appropriate alterations in the program;
- ensure that appropriate information systems are established and maintained so that effective communication is provided regarding each pupil as he/she progresses through school;
- ensure that the program for an exceptional pupil is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation;
- encourage the use of a variety of assessment techniques in order to ensure an informed evaluation of the pupil's progress;
- ensure that, in the allocation of scheduled course time, provision is made for exceptional pupils whose rate of progress warrants the use of more or less time for the successful completion of the work that has been planned;
- arrange for the adaptation of a course (or courses) to meet the needs of an exceptional pupil while maintaining the integrity of the guideline and the quality of the course at the appropriate level of difficulty.

It is important that course choices for exceptional pupils in secondary schools be made from the most

suitable combination of compulsory and optional credits. In order to facilitate this, the principal has been given considerable discretion in reducing the number of compulsory credits required for the OSSD (see section 4.10) or for the Certificate of Education (see section 4.12).

2.4 National Languages

It is essential that all students reach full functional literacy in at least one national language and have some knowledge of the second national language by the time they have completed secondary school. School boards are, therefore, required to make programs of study of both national languages available to all secondary school students to the end of Grade 12.

Language of Instruction

Either English or French shall be the language of instruction in the Intermediate and Senior Divisions. All teachers are expected to assist students to develop facility in English or French as an integral part of the process of developing an understanding of the concepts and skills inherent in the various subjects they are studying.

It is permissible for a teacher to use a language other than English or French in the instruction of students and in communication with students concerning matters of discipline and the management of the school. This provision applies when a student cannot understand either English or French. It is intended to apply for the transitional period during which a student is learning the English or French language.

All students may choose to be admitted to an English-language school or class.

Students whose parents wish to exercise their minority-language educational rights under section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms shall be admitted to French-language schools and classes. A student whose parents do not have those rights may attend French-language schools and classes if an admissions committee recommends the student's admission and the admission is approved by the board.

Credits in English As a Second Language

a) In an English-Language School

Students may enter an English-language school without a working knowledge of the language of instruction. In order to enable these students to develop sufficient proficiency in English to join the regular English program, courses may be developed, for credit, from the guideline *English As a Second*

Language and English Skills Development, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1988 (ESL/D).

The following requirements apply to credits obtained through ESL/D courses:

- A student, regardless of the grade at which he/she enters the Ontario secondary school system, may take a maximum of five ESL/D courses for credit towards the OSSD.
- One ESL/D credit may replace one of the two Senior Division English credits required for the OSSD.
- Students wishing to take English OAC I must first successfully complete at least one Senior Division advanced-level English course based on the guideline *English, Intermediate and Senior Divisions (Grades 7–12), 1987*.

Students who have completed ESL/D courses should be able to join the regular English program at one of the three levels of difficulty.

b) In a French-Language School

Students in French-language schools across Ontario exhibit considerable diversity in English-language development. Some live in an environment that exposes them to English almost constantly; others may have only occasional exposure to English, while still others may have no exposure beyond their English classes.

A special ESL program may be developed to meet the particular needs and to take into account the proficiency levels of students who are entering French-language secondary schools from predominantly French-speaking areas and who have had very limited or no exposure to English.

Within such a program, the courses based on the *Anglais/English* guideline may be counted as the compulsory credit required for the OSSD. The OAC requirements, however, may not be altered.

Credits in French As a Second Language

a) In an English-Language School

Students entering English-language secondary schools may have taken core, extended, or immersion programs in French or, in rare instances, may not have participated in any program in French. Wherever feasible, students entering secondary school with an immersion or extended French background should be offered a program at their level of proficiency in the subject of French as well as programs in other subjects taught in French.

Where only a core French program is offered, extended and immersion French students should be considered for advanced placement. Students placed in higher grades shall not be granted credits for French courses that they have not taken in secondary school. Elementary school students may, however, reach

ahead to take French credit courses in the type of program that they have taken in elementary school (see section 6.2).

Wherever possible, courses should be offered at levels of difficulty that will enable students to reach the proficiency necessary to pursue their educational or career goals. Assistance in developing core programs at appropriate levels of difficulty may be found in the guideline *French, Core Programs, 1980* and the resource guide *French for Basic Communication, 1987*.

In some cases, a student entering an English-language secondary school may have completed a program in a French-language school. For such a student, it is possible to substitute, for the required compulsory credit in French as a second language, another course from those listed as compulsory, provided the other requirements of section 4.10, note (d), are met.

b) In a French-Language School

The extent to which French is the language of communication of the students in a French-language school varies from school to school and depends on the students' family background and current linguistic environment. Some are predominantly French-speaking, some are predominantly English-speaking, and others have a first language that is neither French nor English. Most are bilingual and some are multilingual.

In view of the fact that most Ontario communities provide few, if any, opportunities to use French in actual situations, the French-language school must become a place where the students *use* the language, not just a place where they are taught it. If it is to accomplish this, the French-language school must first of all strive to foster the students' sense of self-worth and cultural identity. It must function as a centre where students are given opportunities, both within the classroom and outside it – in the social life of the school – to increase their awareness of, identification with, and commitment to the French-Canadian culture.

Credit Courses in Other Languages

Where authorized by a ministry curriculum guideline, or where approved by a school board and the ministry, credit courses may be offered in the study of languages other than English, French, anglais, or français, but these other languages may not be used as the medium of instruction in other subjects, except under the circumstances indicated above.

2.5 Language Across the Curriculum

Language plays a central role in learning. No matter what the subject area, students assimilate new concepts largely through language, that is, through listening, speaking, reading, and writing and, in particular, by using language to relate what they are learning to what they already know. Through speaking and writing, language is linked to the thinking process and is a manifestation of the thinking that is taking place. Thus, by explaining and expressing personal interpretations of new learnings in the various subject fields, students clarify and increase both their knowledge of the concepts in those fields and their understanding of the ways in which language is used in each.

It follows, then, that schools should provide an environment in which students are encouraged to use language to explore concepts, solve problems, organize information, share discoveries, formulate hypotheses, and explain personal ideas. Students need frequent opportunities to interact in small-group discussions that focus on the exploration of new concepts. In addition, they should be encouraged to keep journals in which they write thoughts, questions, and speculations that reflect on their learning.

Principals should provide leadership by encouraging all teachers to participate in developing and practising a school language policy, which is, in effect, a school learning policy. By allowing students to discuss and write in the language they already control, teachers can gain new insights into the difficulties that students are encountering in particular subject areas. In this way teachers can help students to avoid rote learning and to gain clear understandings.

2.6 The Arts

In every culture the arts serve both as forms of communication and as means of expression. As places where students prepare for their roles in the larger society, schools should plan programs that enable students to experience the enriching environment that the arts provide.

For OSSD purposes every student is required to obtain at least one credit in the arts (see section 4.10). In addition to planned and scheduled courses in subjects traditionally identified as the arts, the school's program should include an aesthetic dimension as an integral part both of its courses and its co-instructional program. This enrichment can be accomplished in a variety of ways, including the use of the various media, references to the arts and culture in studies of literature, history, and the social sciences, attention to qualities of design and effect in diagrams and graphic presentations of information, and the use

of dramatic techniques in expressing and interpreting ideas and concepts in all subjects of the curriculum. Similarly, all teachers should be encouraging students to realize the personal fulfilment that is achieved by active participation in the arts.

2.7 The New Technologies

The nature of work and leisure in contemporary society is being redefined by technological development, especially the application of electronic technologies to the performance of a wide variety of tasks. Examples of the fundamental changes in the ways in which tasks are accomplished may be found in the communications media, the processing of information, medicine, and manufacturing, to name only a few. Increasingly, microelectronic processors are becoming integral to the functions of the workplace.

The pervasiveness of these changes places an obligation on educators to be aware of them and their effects on society, to relate the uses and potential uses of technology to their subject fields, to assist students in making informed decisions about career preparation in a changing workplace, and to use the available technologies wherever possible to enhance the teaching and learning processes within their schools.

An increase in the availability of microcomputers and access to computer networks will enable schools to meet administrative and student services objectives more effectively. Of greater significance, however, will be the changes in curriculum that will be required. In planning the total curriculum, principals and teachers should consider how best to incorporate knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to the computer in every program. In view of the rapid and widespread use of computers, all students should have the opportunity to become familiar with computers and to understand their effects on society, both by using educational software in a variety of courses and by taking credit courses in computer studies.

2.8 Multiculturalism

The Province of Ontario has a tradition of providing opportunities for people of various cultural, linguistic, racial, and religious origins to build a life together as Canadians. It welcomes the diversity of cultures and acknowledges it as a source of enrichment and strength. The Ontario government is committed to equality of treatment and opportunity for all its citizens and recognizes its responsibility to ensure that there are no barriers to full participation in this province's society.

The policies on multiculturalism and race relations officially adopted by the government of Ontario

accept cultural and racial diversity as a significant characteristic of the province's social fabric and, accordingly, require the schools to help prepare all students to live in this multicultural and multiracial society and in an increasingly interdependent world. It is essential that every individual, regardless of his/her colour, race, religion, age, or sex, have the right to equal educational opportunity and to personal dignity and respect. Schools demonstrate their commitment to this principle by:

- helping all students achieve their potential in physical, intellectual, emotional, social, cultural, and moral development;
- guaranteeing all students freedom from physical and verbal attack or psychological abuse in our classrooms and playgrounds;
- exercising a positive role in addressing issues and resolving conflicts involving interracial and intercultural tensions;
- ensuring that all students have equal access to the educational programs and recreational facilities available in the school system.

Programs in the Intermediate and Senior Divisions should build on the educational goals stated in *The Formative Years*. In fulfilling these goals, schools will provide educational programs and services that will assist and encourage students to:

- develop and maintain confidence and a sense of self-worth;
- develop and retain a personal identity by becoming acquainted with the historical roots of the community and culture of their origin and by developing a sense of continuity with the past;
- begin to understand and appreciate the points of view of ethnic and cultural groups other than their own;
- develop an understanding of such concepts as community, conflict, culture, and interdependence;
- develop the skills and knowledge necessary to understand and deal with prejudice, discrimination, and other forms of racism;
- learn the social skills and attitudes on which effective and responsible co-operation and participation depend.

The goals of multiculturalism and the principles set out above should be integrated into the educational process. These objectives should permeate the school's curriculum, policies, teaching methods and materials, courses of study, and assessment and testing procedures, as well as the attitudes and expectations of its staff and all their interaction with students, parents, and the community. Programs, policies, and services that meet the needs of a multicultural and multiracial society must be established for all students and school board staff.

Teachers should be encouraged to develop courses that are consistent with the educational goals of multiculturalism and that reflect fairly and accurately the reality of Canada's multicultural, multiracial society. Principals should ensure that, where relevant, core units exploring the multicultural and multiracial dimensions of issues are incorporated into compulsory subjects so that every student's program will reflect this contemporary reality.

2.9 Life Skills

Life skills are abilities that are useful to a person in everyday life. They can be at once a means of deepening and broadening learning in a subject and a way of giving that subject additional meaning for the learner. Included among these skills could be the ability:

- to use language with clarity and accuracy;
- to analyse ideas expressed in pictures, prose, or conversation and discussion;
- to distinguish fact from opinion;
- to compute;
- to organize time;
- to reason practically;
- to plan projects by identifying the purpose and action steps and by setting a time line;
- to establish priorities;
- to read a newspaper or observe television or a film with discrimination;
- to evaluate the quality of one's own work;
- to treat others with courtesy and respect.

In a life-skills approach to curriculum it is important to make explicit the relationship between knowledge and everyday life, the *usefulness* of knowledge, and the *application* of knowledge to everyday life.

2.10 Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Pupils

Ontario regulations permit a parent to apply for the release of a student, aged fourteen or over, from regular school attendance so that the student can participate in an alternative learning experience that is considered suitable for him/her. Such an alternative learning experience is supervised by a school. This experience may involve attendance at some classes or a full-time program away from the school and can enable students to earn credits for diploma purposes. After the program is approved by a committee established according to the regulation, the student continues to be registered at the school until he/she is no longer of compulsory-school-attendance age. Regular contact with the student is maintained by a teacher or other staff member. The principal shall

report to the parents whenever achievement reports are issued. The student needs to feel that the school has a continuing concern for his/her educational progress. The school shall maintain the Ontario Student Record for each student involved in the program.

2.11 Library Resource Centres

The school library resource centre provides for the needs of both students and teachers. Its teaching/learning program, which is an integral part of the total school program, depends on three major, interrelated components – personnel, materials, and facilities.

The Ministry of Education publication *Partners in Action: The Library Resource Centre in the School Curriculum* (1982) emphasizes that the success of the library resource centre program depends on co-operation between classroom teachers and the teacher-librarian in the systematic planning of the school's overall programs. The principal should ensure that teachers and the teacher-librarian have the time to plan co-operatively so that activities and materials in the resource centre directly support program objectives.

Ontario regulations require that a teacher placed in charge of a school library program have librarianship qualifications. Co-operative planning requires that teacher-librarians have expertise in curriculum planning and program evaluation, in the development and teaching of library, research, and learning skills, and in the evaluation, selection, and use of learning materials. Since modern technology provides students with better access to information, teacher-librarians must be knowledgeable about information networks, the use of computerized databases, courseware and lessonware, other technological aids to student learning, and new methods of organizing resources.

Resource-based learning, including inquiry learning, individualization, independent study, and teacher-directed learning, requires a broad spectrum of resources to match student abilities and learning styles and to support instructional programs. Such resources need to be available on demand from and through the school library resource centre. Central to the teaching/learning process are print and non-print materials as well as the technological developments in communication and information retrieval.

Library facilities and equipment are important components of the resource centre program. These are directly related to the type of services offered, the learning activities, and the people to be accommodated. To meet the needs of individuals, small groups, and complete classes, the library resource centre facilities should be available throughout the school day.

An effective school library resource centre program contributes significantly to the skills needed for academic achievement, continuing education, and future career flexibility.

2.12 Selection of Textbooks

Circular 14: Textbooks is an annual publication that provides a list of textbooks approved by the Minister of Education for use in Ontario schools. This circular is published annually in January. Two supplements are published – *Circular 14A* in the spring and *Circular 14B* in the fall – to provide updated listings of texts that have been approved for use.

The sections from the Education Act and regulations that pertain to the use of textbooks in schools are included in the introductory pages of *Circular 14*. Reference should be made to these sections as well as to the section entitled “Selection of Textbooks”.

Textbook selection shall be made from *Circular 14* in all subject areas for which approved texts are listed in the circular unless permission to use another text has been granted by the Minister. The texts selected for use must be approved by board resolution (see the Education Act). Although there are texts listed in *Circular 14* for OACs, teachers may select other materials that they deem appropriate, subject to the approval of the local school board.

In those subject areas and programs for which no texts are listed in *Circular 14* or for which the texts listed do not provide material for the entire course, as noted in the circular, texts provided by the school board are to be selected by the principal in consultation with the teachers. The selection is to be approved by board resolution (see the Education Act).

Permission to use textbooks not listed in *Circular 14* or not covered by the provisions given above must be obtained by the chief education officer of the school board from the regional director of education. The request should include a statement to the effect that the board has approved the use of these textbooks.

Permission is also required for texts to be used with non-guideline courses. A submission for the approval of a non-guideline course should include a list of the textbooks proposed for use in the course and a statement to the effect that the board has approved the use of these texts.

Where texts are to be selected locally, preference should be given to books written by Canadian authors and edited, printed, and bound in Canada.

2.13 Sex Equity

It is the policy of the government of Ontario to extend equal educational opportunity to all students in the province. It is inappropriate for any school to deny a student access to a course or a program solely on the basis of the student's sex. This does not make mixed classes of male and female students obligatory, but the policy underlines the fact that sex-role stereotyping of courses and programs is to be avoided. Similar courses may be given to mixed or unmixed classes so that students of either sex are free to participate in courses in all available subjects.

Sex-role stereotyping narrowly defines roles for males and females in our society. Since the school is one of the major agents of socialization, the existence of sex-role stereotyping in educational materials and methods perpetuates the traditional attitudes governing male and female behaviour, placing many obstacles in the individual's path to self-actualization. The learning environment should provide the opportunities necessary for the achievement of the goals of education. Students should be able to see men and women in a variety of roles, exhibiting a wide range of human behaviour, abilities, and emotions. Materials and methods in our schools must reflect a society to which both men and women are contributing.

A balanced representation of the achievements of women in both the curriculum and in learning materials provides female role models and helps students recognize that the combination of being female and accomplished in non-traditional occupational areas is possible. Without this recognition, unnecessary and inequitable limitations are placed on the development of the individual potential of female students.

The philosophy of sex equity, then, should permeate all aspects of the school's curriculum, policies, teaching methods and materials, and assessment procedures, as well as the attitudes and expectations of its staff and all their interaction with students, parents, and the community. This policy is reflected in Ministry of Education curriculum guidelines. In addition, a number of support documents have been developed to assist teachers in creating a learning environment that is free from sex-role stereotyping and a curriculum that accurately reflects the experiences and contributions of women.

2.14 The Native-As-a-Second-Language Program

The Native peoples of Ontario are concerned that their languages and cultures are being lost since many of the younger generation are no longer able to speak or understand their ancestral language.

In response to this concern and in recognition of the fact that language is a key factor in the preservation of cultural identity, a Native-as-a-second-language (NSL) program, designed to enable students, both Native and non-Native, to receive instruction in a Native language from Kindergarten to Grade 12/OAC, was introduced in Ontario schools in September 1987.

The provisions for the new program recognize that Native languages have a legitimate place in the curriculum of Ontario schools; accordingly, Native languages must be taught during the regular school day in elementary schools and offered as credit courses in secondary schools in all jurisdictions offering the NSL program. The curriculum guideline, *Native Languages, 1987*, provides direction for the organization of courses of study.

One of the principal aims of the NSL program is to provide a more meaningful education for Native students. It is anticipated that Native students who are given the opportunity to study their ancestral language will gain a more positive sense of their identity, will be better motivated to attend school regularly, and will have greater success in both educational and skills training programs.

3. School Curriculum and Program Requirements: Elementary (Grades 7 and 8)

3.1 The Student in Grades 7 and 8

In Grades 7 and 8 most students enter the phase of human growth and development termed *adolescence*. Adolescence spans those important years when students are making their transition from childhood to adulthood. During this time, most students undergo profound physical, physiological, emotional, intellectual, and social changes. These aspects of growth and development are seldom in step with one another; within each individual they are characterized by uneven progress. It is normal for everyone to undergo development in each aspect, but the progress of each individual follows a unique pattern. As a consequence, every student represents a unique profile of development.

How well individuals function depends largely on their feelings of self-worth. The self-confidence of early adolescents is particularly vulnerable because they are experiencing a stage in their lives when their roles and responsibilities may no longer be clearly defined either in their own minds or in the minds of those around them. Teachers are in a position to recognize the effects of changes on early adolescents and to deal, within the school curriculum, with their need to come to terms with themselves. Adolescents require opportunities to identify personal strengths and talents, as well as guidance on how to capitalize on these and to deal realistically with their limitations.

Grades 7 and 8 are part of the elementary program. For that reason, this document does not advocate the placement of Grades 7 and 8 in a secondary school. Decisions on school organization of this kind must reflect the needs, resources, and wishes of local communities.

3.2 The Learning Process

Ideally, the school curriculum should enable adolescent learners to grow in all respects. It is important, therefore, that the learning experiences planned by the school be based on a knowledge of the learning process, that is, on what is known about learning and how it happens, on what is known about thinking and how it happens, and on how learning relates to experience, expression, and language.

Learning in school occurs most often through the medium of language. The specialized knowledge and language of subjects can be understood by the individual learner only in terms of his/her own vocabulary. Growth in both language and understanding follows the successful integration of new terminology and ways of expressing concepts.

If the learning process is to be effective, opportunities must be provided for students to articulate the new understandings as they encounter them in their studies. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are important processes in extending the students' capability to communicate, to understand, and to think. All teachers, therefore, have a responsibility to develop their students' language capabilities.

Learning in all subjects can be more effective when individual learners take an active part in the learning experience. The more intensive the experience, the more learning will take place. When learning experiences are planned, ways should be sought to help students become active participants rather than passive observers. The learning process may be further enhanced through the use of teaching strategies that allow students to participate actively in planning, carrying out, and evaluating learning experiences.

Of necessity, much of the learning that takes place in schools occurs through language and through perceptual and expressive experiences in other media. Visual, aural, and dramatic expression extend well beyond the arts subjects into all areas of the curriculum and contribute important learning perspectives along with language.

The education of adolescents can become more meaningful if their learning relates their individual needs and interests to the functions of the larger society of which they form a part. A well-planned program should involve the community in such a way that out-of-school experiences reinforce, extend, and provide motivation for student learning. Out-of-school experiences may take a number of forms. One involves the use of community resources through field work, visits, and similar information-gathering activities. Another form involves the provision of services such as work with younger children, aid to the elderly or handicapped, or participation in worthwhile community projects. Such experiences can help adolescents in their growth towards independence and can provide them with valuable insights into human nature, interpersonal relations, and social realities which can seldom be gained solely from school programs.

3.3 The Planning Process

Primary responsibility for the planning of curriculum lies with the principal and teachers of the school working in conjunction with supervisory officers and other educators employed by their school board. Good planning involves the following:

- *the careful consideration of the relevant curriculum guidelines of the Ministry of Education, including the knowledge, attitude, and skill objectives identified by the guidelines*

Curriculum guidelines applicable to Grades 7 and 8 may be used individually or in combination. Knowledge of the guidelines facilitates the allocation of time, personnel, and resources to the teaching of subjects or combinations of subjects in units of study, topics, and themes.

- *the continuous assessment of student progress, interests, and needs*

The information derived from assessment should be formative in its purposes. The involvement of students in this process provides them with opportunities to acquire self-evaluation skills. The modification of the program at appropriate times is facilitated by continuous assessment.

- *the identification of the different learning styles of individual students*

Individuals vary in the ways they receive, process, and apply information. Teachers should be prepared to identify learning styles, needs, and abilities and to make adjustments to the program in order to accommodate them.

- *the use of teaching strategies that help all students achieve the knowledge, attitude, and skill objectives outlined in the curriculum guidelines*

Effective teaching strategies vary from teacher to teacher in relation to the teacher's personality and style. Strategies should include personal or group investigations, creative problem solving, field studies, simulations, case studies, the stimulation of personal expression, role playing, dramatization, and model building.

- *the grouping and regrouping of students to accommodate varying instructional patterns and to facilitate teacher supervision, counselling, and guidance*

Grouping enables students to join together in various combinations suited to selected learning activities.

- *consultation with the community in order to ensure that program objectives reflect the priorities of concerned and thoughtful parents and to identify resources that will enhance the school program*

It is through liaison with the community that opportunities can be arranged to enable students to learn in the community and about the community, including the world of work.

- *consultation with the staff of schools from which students may come and to which they may proceed on completion of their programs*

This link will help to ensure consolidation and reinforcement of important skills and concepts while encouraging the freshness and challenge of succeeding programs. The primary benefit should be the continuous progress of individual students.

- *an analysis of existing fiscal resources, learning materials, and human resources, including those available in the community*

Every effort must be made to provide a variety of resources that will meet individual student needs. It is important to analyse and effectively use the resources currently available to the school or system.

- *the continuing evaluation of existing curricula*
This facilitates the making of adjustments to suit the changing and diverse needs of both students and the community. It also provides for the identification of curriculum strengths and weaknesses.

3.4 The Instructional Program in Grades 7 and 8

The significant changes taking place in students' lives make necessary programs that uniquely suit this period of their education. During their years in the Junior Division students will have been involved in a program that, by design, was comprehensive and integrated in its approach to the acquisition of knowledge, the development and practice of skills, and the formation of values and attitudes. Although many of the aims and objectives of the curriculum are identified by subject in the curriculum guidelines for Grades 7 and 8, it is essential that much of the instructional process continue to be based on comprehensive and integrated approaches. At the same time it should be recognized that each subject does embody particular knowledge, skills, and attitudes that may be best presented in the context of a specific subject and time frame.

Program development includes establishing objectives and planning learning experiences and sequences. The program for Grades 7 and 8 should be characterized by breadth and should be planned to develop a wide range of interests. The organization of the program should allow time for the consolidation of knowledge and the practice of skills, as well as

the introduction of new and challenging learning opportunities, including opportunities to develop unique talents and to explore vocational interests.

The following are to be provided for in the design and organization of the program of studies in each of the two years:

- a home-room base with a teacher who takes responsibility for the guidance and counselling of a group of students, as well as making decisions that relate personal needs to learning needs. The teacher maintains close contact with each student in the group and follows his/her progress;
- the use of school subjects, represented by the relevant curriculum guidelines, as major vehicles for learning experiences and the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. In the Intermediate Division, subjects should be viewed in two ways: as an organized way of knowing something from a particular perspective and as a medium through which broader concepts and experiences can be developed. In Grades 7 and 8 curriculum guidelines may be used individually or in varied combinations as the policy framework for local curriculum development and program design;
- integrated learning experiences that counterbalance the artificial divisions that may be created by an excessive subject orientation. Integrated learning experiences do not just arise from the combining of subjects. Frequently their origins are in a significant and timely event, the encountering of a problem, the desire to explore an interesting phenomenon, or a unifying theme. A variety of subject-oriented and other resources may be used in the development of integrated units, themes, and areas of study;
- opportunities for individual exploratory learning. Exploratory learning takes place when a student takes the initiative to seek experiences in which he/she is interested as a result of personal needs, talents, or purposes. In addition to a broad common program of studies, it is important in the early years of the Intermediate Division to develop opportunities for students to make responsible choices, exercise personal initiatives, and investigate and study independently. These kinds of individual experiences may arise from the context of guidelines and subjects but are not limited to these origins;
- a number of important dimensions that need to be reflected in the broad program of studies, but that are not always accommodated by individual subject areas. Some of these can be facilitated within integrated units of study, but others should be pervading factors in all or several aspects of the curriculum. For example, while reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills are important to language study, it is crucial that they also be developed throughout all subject areas. Other cross-curricular

dimensions to be reflected in a variety of learning experiences include the following:

- a) appreciation of the role of the arts in the learning process;
- b) response to the aesthetic and qualitative characteristics of phenomena and experience through an emphasis on sensory perception, feeling, and reflection;
- c) appreciation of the cultural heritage of Native peoples;
- d) knowledge of Canada and Canadian society;
- e) awareness of the influences and rapid developments of technology and communications;
- f) appreciation of personal and societal values;
- g) recognition of the various ethnic groups that contribute to our society.

The accompanying chart of minimum time allocations is provided as a means of ensuring both breadth and balance in the school program. It is not presented as a model for designing timetables, since the range of school organizations and classrooms offering Grade 7 and 8 programs cannot be accommodated by a single, uniform scheduling pattern.

When planning the program for each student in Grades 7 and 8, principals *shall* ensure that the following prescribed study areas be allocated the specified minimum hours of instructional time. When two or more study areas are combined in an integrated program, the time specifications indicate the relative balance that should obtain among learning activities whose primary focus is directed to one or other of the specific subjects contained in the study areas. The allocations are described in terms of the total time available, which shall be not less than 5 hours per school day for a minimum of 185 instructional days (a minimum of 925 hours per year).

Study Area	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time <i>Hours per Year</i>
<i>Arts</i>	
Dramatic arts, music, and visual arts	120
<i>Language arts</i>	
First language: English/français	150
Second language: French/anglais	60–120
<i>Mathematics and science</i>	
Mathematics	120
Science	80
<i>Physical and health education, guidance</i>	
Physical and health education	80
Guidance	20
<i>Social sciences</i>	
History and geography	120

Personal and practical studies

The remaining hours of instructional time shall be allocated to personal and practical studies to be selected from:

- additional units in the study areas listed above,
- religious education,
- Native as a second language,
- industrial arts,
- family studies,
- units related to business and industry,
- units related to life skills and parenting,
- locally developed electives.

Notes

- a) The curriculum guidelines for the Intermediate Division shall be used in the design of these personal and practical studies wherever such studies are described in a guideline.
- b) Schools that do not offer family studies and industrial arts are encouraged to develop units of study that provide an introductory awareness of the family as a social unit and of the world of business and industry.
- c) Principals should provide for a balanced program among the subjects in the arts and the social sciences in each of Grades 7 and 8.
- d) Curriculum guidelines applicable to Grades 7 and 8 shall be used (singly or in various combinations) as a basis for local curriculum development. However, the specified time allocations do not preclude an integrated approach to the curriculum. It should also be understood that the time allocation specified presupposes an integrated treatment of language and the arts within other subjects.
- e) A range of instructional times is provided for the “second language” to provide time for school boards to work towards the objective of 120 hours per year in French as a second language in each of Grades 7 and 8. French is recognized as an integral part of the Grade 7 and 8 programs.
- f) The prescribed program specified in this section shall be compulsory for each student enrolled in Grades 7 and 8 unless:
 - i) the pupil is exceptional as determined by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee; or
 - ii) the Ministry of Education guideline being used allows for exemptions.

3.5 The Heritage Languages Program in Grades 7 and 8

Note: Languages as subjects of study for credit in secondary schools are described in section 2.4.

In accordance with current provincial regulations, a school board must offer language programs in languages other than English or French to pupils qualified to enrol in the Primary or Junior Divisions or the first two years of the Intermediate Division. The ministry provides school boards with funds for this purpose under the regulation relating to general legislative grants.

The individual school board is responsible for the curriculum and supervision of such programs, as well as for the hiring of instructors with appropriate qualifications. Classes may be held outside regular school hours – that is, after school or on weekends – or during the day by extending the school day.

Such language programs shall not be included in the scheduled minimum time allocation of 925 hours referred to in section 3.4 above.

3.6 Promotion From Grade 8 to Grade 9

A pupil who has been promoted from elementary school shall be admitted to a secondary school.

A person who is not promoted to a secondary school shall be admitted if the principal of the secondary school is satisfied that the applicant is competent to undertake a program in that school. Where an applicant is denied admission by the principal of the secondary school, the applicant may appeal to the board, and the board may admit or refuse the applicant.

Some students enter secondary schools without having taken or successfully completed the work of Grades 7 and 8. Initially, courses taken by such students in the secondary school program may or may not be assigned credit value as decided by the principal in consultation with the school staff. However, by the beginning of the third year after leaving the Junior Division, all courses taken by such students in secondary schools shall be eligible for credit.

4. School Curriculum and Program Requirements: Secondary (Grades 9 to 12/ OACs)

4.1 The Program in Grades 9 and 10

The transition from Grade 8 to Grade 9 can be stressful for many students. It may mean a different and larger school building, a different set of teachers with whom to relate, separation from friends, and different teaching styles. For all students, and exceptional pupils in particular, the entry into secondary school can be facilitated by guidance services, which help them select the courses best suited to their particular needs and abilities.

In order to help students achieve a greater sense of security and reduce the feeling of isolation that is often felt in large schools, the principal should attempt, where possible, to give more coherence to classroom organization in both Grades 9 and 10 by grouping students for sets of classes in the compulsory courses.

The program in Grades 9 and 10 is exploratory in nature. It should serve to help each student confirm interests, test talents, form clearer career goals, and begin to formulate more detailed plans for further study. Grade 9 often serves as a trial period for students, allowing them to take courses at as challenging a level of difficulty as is consistent with their personal goals and abilities. The Grade 9 year is normally quite homogeneous and similar to Grades 7 and 8, since most students have similar timetables. In Grade 10, however, more individualization is likely to occur as students begin more specialized programs, concentrating on particular fields and exploring others.

4.2 The Program in Grades 11 and 12

In Grades 11 and 12 students are able to pursue more specific career and life goals, since most of them are likely to have completed the majority of the compulsory courses in Grades 9 and 10.

Students in Grades 11 and 12 will select a combination of courses that will provide them with the best foundation for personal career and life aspirations. They should be made aware of such program

opportunities as the Linkage program and co-operative education, which give them the opportunity to test their interests and provide them with a wider view of the world of work. Such programs are valuable to students, whether they are bound for university, a community college, or intend to enter directly into the world of work.

4.3 Ontario Academic Courses (OACs)

Students who intend to go on to university will normally take most of the compulsory credits at the advanced level of difficulty in order to prepare themselves for the Ontario Academic Courses (OACs).

OACs provide university-entrance courses common to all the secondary schools of Ontario. Thus, it is particularly important that depth of study and high academic standards be maintained in these courses.

The following policies govern OACs:

- OACs shall be at the advanced level of difficulty.
- No fractional credit less than one shall be granted for an OAC. A credit value greater than one shall be assigned to an OAC that exceeds in scheduled time and content the requirements for a single credit by at least one-quarter of a credit.
- Credits in OACs may be counted among those required for an OSSD and may be used to meet the compulsory credit requirements.
- Every student taking an OAC shall take at least one formal exam in that OAC.
- There shall be no non-guideline OACs.
- OACs shall not be developed for the co-operative education program.

4.4 Granting Credits

A credit is granted in recognition of the successful completion of a course that has been scheduled for a minimum of 110 hours. In granting credits, principals shall ensure that the intention of this definition of a credit is fulfilled by determining that the following conditions have been met:

- The course has been developed from a Ministry of Education curriculum guideline or has been approved by the ministry.
- The amount of work expected in the scheduled time and the evaluation of student achievement were both significant components of the course.
- The course required the satisfactory completion of an amount of work at a level that could reasonably be expected of the students for whom it was planned.

The credit is granted by the principal of a school offering secondary school programs on behalf of the Minister of Education.

4.5 Modules

While “full-credit” courses of a minimum of 110 hours are the norm, there are advantages in making some “short” courses available to students. For this reason courses based on thirty-hour modules may be scheduled. In such cases fractional credits shall be awarded on the basis of one-quarter credit for each thirty-hour module. No credit assignment of less than one-quarter credit is permitted.

Reference should be made to specific guidelines regarding any limitations on the number of credits or fractions thereof that may be offered from any individual guideline. To ensure adequate depth of study in an OAC, no fractional credit less than one shall be granted in these courses.

4.6 Levels of Difficulty

Where circumstances permit and where it is considered desirable, secondary school courses from Grade 9 to 12 may be offered at one or more of the following levels of difficulty: the basic level, the general level, and the advanced level. Principals shall adopt these terms to describe the levels of difficulty of the courses offered in their schools. Note that these terms refer only to courses, not to students. All courses must be described in course calendars according to their purposes and content rather than in terms of the academic competencies of the students who select them.

Many courses will be offered at only one level of difficulty, but where circumstances permit and where the needs of different students can be accommodated by offering courses at two or more levels of difficulty, such levels should be offered. This is particularly important in the required subjects, since their successful completion is necessary for the earning of a diploma. OACs shall be at the advanced level of difficulty.

Courses developed at any of the three levels of difficulty may be adapted to meet the learning needs of exceptional pupils. This adaptation would normally be arranged by the principal of the school.

Open-level courses shall no longer be offered. However, it is recognized that some schools will find it necessary to plan and offer bilevel and/or multigrade classes. The course objectives and the evaluation procedures for each level of difficulty included in such combined classes must be stated clearly so that students, parents, and teachers are aware of the credit requirements for each. All credits shall be reported as basic, general, or advanced only. (See section 5.5.)

The general characteristics of the three levels of difficulty may be described as follows:

Basic Level

Basic level courses are designed to focus on the development of personal skills, social understanding, self-confidence, and preparation for the world of work. The academic work and related skills should be perceived by the student as being personally useful. Such courses will assist students to prepare for a successful, independent home and working life, to manage personal financial resources, to communicate effectively, and to develop attitudes that foster respect for the environment, good health and fitness, and a positive approach towards work and leisure. These courses should serve the needs of the student who may not participate in postsecondary education and provide a good preparation for direct entry into employment.

General Level

General level courses should be considered as appropriate preparation for employment, careers, or further education in certain programs in the colleges of applied arts and technology and other non-degree-granting postsecondary educational institutions.

General level courses will be designed in terms of a mix of the following aims:

- to prepare students to read, write, listen, and speak with confidence and clarity;
- to prepare students to participate as active and compassionate citizens in a democratic society;
- to prepare students to develop the attitudes and skills that will permit them to enter directly into employment on graduation or into certain programs at the colleges of applied arts and technology;
- to prepare students to develop the habit of learning those new, personal skills (problem-solving, domestic, consumer, recreational) that they may need throughout their lives;
- to acquaint students with the language, assumptions, issues, and career opportunities of various subject or social disciplines;
- to stimulate students to continue to develop and increase their awareness, appreciation, and enjoyment of and skill in the arts.

The priority among these aims will vary with the focus of any given course, but it is expected that the first four aims will normally be integral to any general level course. It is also essential that instructional and evaluation practices be consistent with these aims.

Advanced Level

Advanced level courses should focus on the development of academic skills and prepare students for entry to university or to certain programs of the colleges of applied arts and technology. Such courses should be designed to assist students to understand the theoretical principles, practical applications, and

substantive content of a subject. All of the aims that have been described for general level and basic level courses can be incorporated into advanced level courses. Communication skills, citizenship preparation, aesthetic awareness, and personal skills of various kinds are essential components of most advanced level courses, but the focus of these courses must be on academic preparation.

Advanced level courses that are enriched may be offered where feasible. Student achievement in such courses shall be reported at the advanced level so that all students taking an advanced level course, whether it is enriched or not, will receive assessments based on comparable standards. This is particularly important when students submit their results to postsecondary institutions.

4.7 Curriculum Guidelines and Guideline Courses

The content of the educational programs to be offered in the Intermediate and Senior Divisions is authorized by curriculum guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education. These guidelines provide the framework within which courses of study and programs are to be developed at the local level to meet the needs, interests, and aptitudes of students. When revisions of guidelines are made, schools will be advised by memorandum.

Courses and programs designed at the school level must be developed from Ministry of Education guidelines. Where an educational need has been identified that is not met by any curriculum guideline, a non-guideline course may be developed (see section 6.9 for the conditions that govern non-guideline courses).

Courses based on curriculum guidelines require no further approval. In some cases more than one course may be developed from a guideline as long as each course reflects the intent and balance of the guideline. If multiple courses are to be developed, however, the principal must be satisfied that the credit value of each course is proportionate to the work planned, taking into consideration the particular students for whom the course has been designed. Consideration should also be given to how such courses might affect the whole school curriculum. The mix of courses developed from curriculum guidelines should support the educational goals of all students, both those who are proceeding to postsecondary education and those who are entering the world of work after graduation. Some guidelines may specify the number of courses that can be developed from them or that a student can take.

The provision of work-oriented programs is one role of the school. Courses that offer skills training that is applicable to employment in business and industry should be available to students wherever possible, particularly to those who do not plan to

pursue postsecondary education. The effective planning and development of such programs require the participation of local employers and labour representatives. Advisory vocational committees or other groups that can create co-operative links between the school and the working community should be involved in the development and evaluation of all work-oriented courses offered by the school.

4.8 Courses of Study at the School

School staffs and parents need to work together to meet the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and moral needs of secondary school students. It is therefore important that parents be informed of the school's course offerings and their content. Since students under the age of eighteen require parental approval for decisions on course choice, information regarding course content must be made available at the school.

The principal of a school shall retain on file up-to-date copies of outlines of all the courses of study for the school. These outlines of the courses of study in the secondary school shall include at least:

- the name of the Ministry of Education guideline on which the course is based;
- the level of difficulty at which the course is offered;
- the credit value of the course;
- the objectives of the course;
- the core content of the course in the sequence in which it will be studied;
- the evaluation practices that will be used;
- the name(s) of the textbook(s) to be used as well as any other learning materials that are essential to the course.

The outlines of the courses of study shall be available at the school for parents and students to examine. Information regarding access to these outlines shall be included in the annual school course calendar.

4.9 The Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)

An OSSD shall be granted by the Minister of Education, on the recommendation of the principal of the school last attended, to a student who has commenced the first year of a secondary school program on or after September 1, 1984, and who has earned a minimum of 30 credits subject to the conditions specified in section 4.10.

Credit courses in the compulsory subjects are to be based on the curriculum guidelines indicated in appendix B. Where students earn their final credits for

a diploma through the Independent Learning Centre, see section 4.13. Diploma requirements for students entering secondary school prior to September 1, 1984, are summarized in appendix E.

Secondary school students who transfer from one Ontario school to another will have their credits and fractional credits transferred to the new school. Students who do not have Ontario credits, for example, students from some private schools or from schools outside Ontario, shall have their records assessed by the principal of the new school, who will determine those diploma requirements that are yet to be fulfilled. The principal shall not describe, list, or enumerate equivalent accreditation, but, having judged each case on its merits and having determined as equitably as possible the credit equivalency of the student's background, shall determine the number of credits that are yet to be earned and shall outline all related requirements that are to be fulfilled before the student can attain an OSSD.

4.10 Diploma Requirements

In order to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma, a student commencing a secondary school program on or after September 1, 1984, must earn a minimum of 30 credits distributed as follows:

Compulsory Credits (Total of 16)

- 5 credits in English/français (including at least 2 from the Senior Division)
 - 1 credit in French as a second language/anglais
 - 2 credits in mathematics
 - 2 credits in science
 - 1 credit in Canadian geography
 - 1 credit in Canadian history
 - 1 additional credit in the social sciences (Senior Division)
 - 1 credit in the arts
 - 1 credit in physical and health education
 - 1 credit in business studies or technological studies
- and

Elective Credits (Total of 14)

- 14 credits selected from available courses

Notes

- a) Elective credits may be earned in all subjects, including those named in the compulsory credit list, provided that such electives are additional to the compulsory credits. The elective credits allow for concentration in a specialized area of the curriculum.
- b) The 5 compulsory credits in English or français shall include at least 2 credits from Grade 11, Grade 12, and/or OACs.

- c) The guidelines from which the compulsory credits shall be earned are listed in appendix B.
- d) In order to satisfy the needs of individual students, opportunities must be available for the provision of programs that meet these needs, while ensuring that all students' programs are built on a reasonably consistent set of subjects.

In order to ensure that all students can qualify for the OSSD and the Certificate of Education, principals may substitute among the compulsory credits as follows:

- Up to *two* compulsory credits may be replaced by additional courses from the remainder of those listed as compulsory.
- Parental approval of such a substitution shall be provided in writing.
- Each substitution shall be noted on the Ontario Student Transcript.

Students who qualify under this substitute credit arrangement are those whose educational interests, in the opinion of their parents or guardians, principals, and supervisory officers, are best served by such substitution.

The responsibility for controlling the application of this clause for the granting of credits for a diploma shall rest with the chief education officer of the school board or the appropriate supervisory officer in the case of an inspected private school offering secondary school programs.

The above policy does not apply to exceptional pupils. The policy on substitute credits for pupils designated as exceptional by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee is stated in the following note and in section 4.12.

- e) In order to meet the special needs of some exceptional pupils, the principal may reduce the 16 compulsory credits by a maximum of 4; that is, the student's program could include a minimum of 12 compulsory credits within the 30 required for diploma purposes. The sum of compulsory and elective credits shall not be less than 30 in order to earn the OSSD.

The principal may also apply this reduction of credits in the case of a student who has attained a minimum of 16 credits at the basic level of difficulty.

- f) It is possible that many of the compulsory credits, with the exception of those specifically assigned to the Senior Division, will be earned in the first two years of secondary school. However, the distribution of compulsory credits within the total school program is at the discretion of the principal. The compulsory credit in French should, however, normally be earned in Grade 9 so that the student's French program is continuous from its starting grade.

- g) A maximum of 2 credits towards the OSSD shall be awarded by the principal to students who present evidence of satisfactory standing in recognized programs offered by conservatories of music (see sections 4.11 and 6.11 and appendix C).
- h) While a principal may recommend that students take certain courses in addition to the required subjects, the principal shall not identify additional subjects as mandatory requirements towards the earning of an OSSD beyond those stipulated in this document.
- i) Credits in OACs may be counted among the 30 required for an OSSD and may be used to meet the compulsory credit requirements.
- j) In order to meet the compulsory credit requirements for diploma or certificate purposes, students must take the compulsory credit courses, continue in attendance throughout the duration of these courses, and successfully complete them. A student who is not successful in a compulsory course may repeat it, undertake a course at a different level of difficulty, or undertake a different course from a guideline that fulfils the compulsory credit requirements. If it becomes clear, after a reasonable period of time during which a student has been in attendance in a compulsory course, that the student will not be able to complete the course successfully, the student may be permitted to withdraw from the course after consultation among the principal, the parents, and the student has taken place. In such cases the principal or a designated teacher should advise the student of diploma requirements and provide information on alternative courses that would enable him/her to meet the requirements for a diploma or certificate. The availability of courses at a number of levels of difficulty should minimize the number of such cases.
- k) A credit for a non-guideline course cannot be substituted for a compulsory credit. (See appendix B and section 6.9).

4.11 Music Certificates

The certificates listed in the first part of appendix C may be counted for a maximum of one non-OAC credit towards the OSSD in addition to any other non-OAC music credits earned in the school. The certificates listed in the second part of appendix C may be counted for a maximum of one OAC credit towards the OSSD in addition to a maximum of one other OAC credit in music earned in the school.

4.12 Certificate of Education

A student who decides to leave school before earning the OSSD shall receive the Certificate of Education, on request, if he/she has earned a minimum of 14 credits distributed as follows:

Compulsory Credits (Total of 6)

- 2 credits in English/français
- 1 credit in mathematics
- 1 credit in science
- 1 credit in Canadian geography or Canadian history
- 1 credit in physical and health education

and

Elective Credits (Total of 8)

- 8 credits selected by the student from available courses

For exceptional pupils the 6 compulsory credits required for a Certificate of Education may be reduced by the principal by a maximum of 4 so that, within the 14 credits required for a Certificate of Education, there would be a minimum of 2 compulsory credits. However, the sum of compulsory and elective credits shall not be less than 14 in order to earn the Certificate of Education. See also section 4.10, note (d).

4.13 Issuing Diplomas and Certificates

On the recommendation of the principal, the Minister of Education grants diplomas and certificates at any time during the year to students who have successfully completed the necessary requirements.

Where a student has completed the requirements through private study, evening classes, or summer school, the diploma or certificate shall be issued by the principal of the school that possesses the student's Ontario Student Record when the final credit is earned. If the final credit is earned through the Independent Learning Centre, the student may choose to have the diploma or certificate issued by the Director of the Independent Learning Centre or the principal of the school last attended. The person issuing the diploma or certificate shall submit the necessary report to the Ministry of Education.

4.14 Student Records and the Ontario Student Transcript

Students and their parents shall be made aware of the importance of the Ontario Student Record and their right to see it.

In secondary schools a student's record of courses successfully completed and credits gained towards the

requirements for the OSSD or the Certificate of Education is to be maintained on the Ontario Student Transcript. Courses meeting the requirements of current ministry curriculum guidelines shall be entered on the student's transcript through the use of the common course code designation issued by the Ministry of Education.

When a student has gained a minimum of eight credits in either business studies or technological studies, the transcript shall reflect this concentration of courses. The area of concentration and the date of completion of the requirements shall be entered on the transcript in the appropriate space.

When student achievement in courses and programs is reported, a common practice is to use a percentage; some schools use a general range of percentages indicated by a code. In the latter case, the following evaluation code shall be used uniformly in all such schools.

Code Letter	Percentage Attained
A	80.0-100.0
B	70.0-79.9
C	60.0-69.9
D	50.0-59.9
E	Less than 50.0

Either percentages or code letters are acceptable methods of reporting student achievement on report cards. However, only percentages are permitted on the Ontario Student Transcript.

4.15 School Course Calendars

The school course calendar shall inform students and their parents about the courses offered in a secondary school. These course calendars shall also provide a description of the guidance services and the special combinations of courses or packages that are offered at the school. School course calendars should be made available early enough to allow parents and students sufficient time to examine the alternatives and to make judicious decisions. The following shall be included in a school course calendar:

- the objectives of the school
- a list of available courses with an appropriate and precise description of each
- an explanation of the course coding system
- a list of the compulsory credits required to obtain an OSSD
- information regarding the levels of difficulty
- diploma requirements, including the definition of a credit

- a clear indication of the prerequisites for certain courses
- reference to the school's commitment to equal educational opportunity
- the school's expectations regarding students' responsibilities, achievement, and attendance
- information on the services provided through the school guidance program
- a description of available community- and school-related packages
- essential information on evaluation and examination policies
- a description of the Ontario Student Transcript and an explanation of its purpose
- statements relating to the special provisions available to exceptional pupils
- information about co-operative education and the Linkage program, where appropriate
- a statement addressed to parents informing them that outlines of the courses of study are available at the school for their perusal
- the school's policy governing course transfers during the year
- the following sentence: "The courses offered by this school have been developed according to the requirements of the Ontario Ministry of Education."

5. Planning Student Programs: Secondary (Grades 9 to 12/ OACs)

5.1 Program Components

Ideally, a student's program should possess coherence, continuity, and balance. For the individual student coherence can be achieved through the selection of a combination of courses that relate to his/her immediate and long-term goals. Continuity can be achieved through the selection of a combination of courses that follow a logical sequence over time and allow the principles and concepts acquired in one course to be applied to other courses that are being taken at the same time or later. In many respects balance in a student's program is assured by the completion of the compulsory credit courses at an appropriate level of difficulty; however, students should be encouraged to choose a combination of courses that is sufficiently broad that future educational and occupational goals are not restricted to a narrow choice. The achievement of an appropriate mix of the three qualities – coherence, continuity, and balance – should provide all students with the skills they need to continue their education throughout life with competence and confidence.

Depending on the level of difficulty, most courses include a combination of objectives that are theoretical, applied, or directed towards personal growth and life skills. The theoretical or cognitive objectives relate to the factual or conceptual knowledge on which the discipline is structured and can provide a base for continued study in the subject field. The applied objectives include the development of procedural, manipulative, and problem-solving skills using the theory associated with the discipline or subject field. Objectives of this type should also include some understanding of how the knowledge and skills associated with the subject can be applied in various occupations. Objectives that can serve the personal-growth or life-skill needs of students will vary with the subject. This aspect of the program is discussed separately in section 2.9.

The level of difficulty at which a course is planned will reflect the relative emphasis placed on each type of objective. Advanced level courses should emphasize the theoretical or cognitive aspects; general level courses should put more emphasis on the applied elements; basic level courses should focus on personal skills, social understanding, and self-confidence. Each emphasis represents an approach to the teaching and learning of the subject and favours particular strategies. Therefore, if an overall balance is to be achieved in the student's program, that balance must

be planned to some extent in each course. The ways in which the qualities of coherence and continuity may be structured into a student's program are discussed further in section 5.9.

5.2 Influence of Students' Future Goals

All secondary school students must be able to select programs that both are appropriate to their educational goals and capitalize on their abilities, interests, and needs. This should be possible without unnecessarily limiting their future educational and occupational choices.

For the majority of students the educational goals will involve either further formal education or direct entry to the work force after graduation. Whether the further education takes place in a university, a college, or some other postsecondary educational institution, there are entry requirements that must be met appropriately in the secondary school if the student is to be successful in his/her further studies. School personnel should meet with local college and university personnel to gain a mutual understanding of each other's programs and to facilitate as much as possible the students' smooth transition from one institution to the next.

It is equally important to have school programs that are specifically planned for students whose goal is to enter the work force directly after graduation. The availability of school-related packages (see section 5.9) to support career fields such as technological studies or business studies can meet this need only when the delivery of related required subjects is also planned with this goal in mind. This process can be facilitated when regular opportunities are provided for discussion between educators and people from business and industry.

As courses can be planned to serve more than one educational goal, students should not be expected to take all courses at the same level of difficulty. The particular level of difficulty at which a student takes most of his/her courses should not be used to designate or label that student.

5.3 Planning a Program to Meet Students' Goals

In each year in the secondary school each student should select courses from the school program with his/her educational and career goals in mind. Courses should be selected to include the required subjects and be chosen at the most appropriate level of difficulty, whenever there is a choice to be made. All students who are capable of doing so should be strongly

encouraged to expand and deepen their studies by taking more than the minimum number of credit courses towards the earning of a diploma, preferably earning credits from as challenging a level as possible.

The principal and staff of a school may make recommendations to students and their parents regarding the selection of courses. Their recommendations should be based on the best information available about the individual student's abilities, achievements, interests, and educational goals. Such advice may have a significant influence on student choices and parental approval. Students and their parents have the right to make alternative course selections. However, they must be informed of the consequences of these selections on the student's eligibility for the OSSD and/or the Certificate of Education. Students who have attained the age of majority may accept responsibility for their own curricular choices.

In addition, students should be informed of educational and societal priorities that support national objectives such as personal fitness and health, an understanding and appreciation of English and French as official languages, the benefits of multiculturalism, and an awareness of Canada's cultural heritage.

It should be clear that students need not choose all courses at the same level of difficulty. Students planning to enter university are likely to select most of the compulsory credit courses at the advanced level of difficulty so that they are prepared to take the OACs.

Many students will plan their programs to acquire knowledge and skills that can be applied to a particular career field. They may plan to enter business and industry either directly after graduation or after further training in a college or private vocational school. Such students may choose to take many of their courses at the general level of difficulty as well as some at the advanced and/or basic level.

Students who for a variety of reasons may be planning to enter the work force directly from secondary school may choose to take many of their courses at the basic and general levels of difficulty. Their individual programs may involve them in practical studies related to various occupations for up to half of their class time. Compulsory credits in the required subjects could be reduced to four in any one year of the student's program and spread out over the projected four years of attendance. It is important when programs are being planned that students are informed fully of the requirements for the OSSD and the Certificate of Education.

5.4 Revision of a Student's Program

The first years of secondary school should be viewed as exploratory. Many students will change their educational goals and wish to undertake compulsory or elective courses at a higher or lower level of difficulty than they had originally planned. By Grade 11 a student wishing to attempt courses at a higher level of difficulty may have an accumulated deficiency of prerequisite learning, especially in subjects that are sequential. In such cases, the student could undertake remedial work through independent study, repeat the previous course at the higher level of difficulty, or take a transition course designed to prepare the student to move from one level of difficulty to another.

The successful achievement of any course that has been repeated either at a higher or lower level of difficulty may only be counted once for the purpose of meeting diploma requirements unless the subject content of the course is judged by the principal and staff to be substantially different. This is true for either compulsory or elective courses. Where there is a partial overlap between two courses taken at different levels, fractional credits may be applied for new work.

5.5 Bilevel and Multigrade Classes

In secondary schools that are small or highly specialized in their program offerings, it may not be feasible to offer separate classes in all subjects for each of the three levels of difficulty. In such cases a single class may be organized to serve two groups of students, each group taking its course in the same subject and grade but at a different level of difficulty. These courses will likely be either at the basic and general levels or at the general and advanced levels of difficulty. The course objectives and the evaluation procedures for each level of difficulty included in such combined classes must be articulated clearly so that students, parents, and teachers are aware of the credit requirements for each level.

Where the number of students in each grade who are taking courses in the same subject is limited, groups of students in adjacent grades may also be combined in one class.

In all combined classes, the courses should be planned to utilize classroom resources most effectively, recognizing the need for a balance in teacher-instruction time, independent study by the student, project work, and other assignments.

5.6 Prerequisite Courses

Any prerequisites that are considered to be appropriate will be stated in Ministry of Education curriculum guidelines. Schools must provide clear information on such prerequisites to students and parents. No courses shall be identified as prerequisites other than those so identified in Ministry of Education curriculum guidelines.

In cases where individual students or parents request exemption from a prerequisite course, the principal of the school will rule on the request. Should the principal deny the request for exemption from a prerequisite course, the parent or adult student may appeal this decision to the school board, whose decision shall be final.

5.7 Accommodating Returning Students

School programs should be structured to accommodate, as far as possible, persons who have left school and who subsequently decide to return to continue their education. These returning students often come back with a particular career goal in mind, which may involve upgrading their academic standing in particular subjects, completing the requirements for a diploma, or taking a specific skill-development course. There will be a need for the school to be flexible in:

- offering intensive short courses that meet particular needs;
- permitting entrance to courses at a number of different times in the year;
- preparing teachers to meet the unique needs of older students.

The following are some program provisions that can be utilized to meet the needs of returning students:

- thirty-hour or sixty-hour courses for one-quarter or one-half credit (see section 4.5);
- semestered and trimestered programs that allow students to enrol at several different times during the year;
- independent study opportunities (see section 6.3);
- equivalent standing for mature students (see section 6.14);
- school- and community-related packages having a specific job-preparation emphasis (see sections 5.9 and 5.10).

Guidance services for a returning student should focus on providing the student with the specific courses needed to allow him/her to attain his/her personal career objective.

5.8 Business and Technological Education

It is important for students to receive an adequate and appropriate foundation in business and/or technological education. They should be provided with the opportunity to develop a basic understanding of how the world of business operates and the economic forces that support our way of life. They should be encouraged to acquire an understanding of technology and its impact on the individual in our society. They also need to understand the interaction among business, industry, and society in order to function more effectively as citizens, consumers, and workers.

For those students who will seek employment in business and industry on leaving school, vocational education must include the development of skills that are acceptable to business and industry for direct entry into employment. Secondary schools should also provide courses for students who wish to specialize in business and technological programs at a college of applied arts and technology, university, or other postsecondary institution. In order to meet this diversity of needs, principals are encouraged to offer technological and business studies courses at more than one level of difficulty.

In general, business and technological programs in secondary schools should offer diversity in content, function, and approach. The aims and objectives of courses in these programs should focus on one or more of the following:

- an in-depth specialization by students that has an immediate application to employment;
- the acquisition of an appropriate base of compatible subjects as a background for postsecondary education and future employment;
- the development of a general awareness of business and technology for personal use.

OACs in business studies and technological studies may be offered to students who wish to pursue these areas of study at university or a community college or to improve their general knowledge.

5.9 School-Related Packages

Planning a School-Related Package

The term *school-related package* identifies a particular set of courses planned by the school to provide a curricular emphasis for students who may have a specific educational goal in mind. Through collaborative planning, teachers can build relationships among courses within a particular package to facilitate direct entry by students into employment or into training in a particular area of study.

A school-related package includes courses in a subject field of concentration that are offered in sequence over two or more years. Courses in the package contain components directed towards the package's particular emphasis and are supportive of the goal(s) for which the package is planned. In effect, the package provides direction for the student in selecting courses in support of a particular goal. Students may choose all or part of a package.

A package may relate a few courses in Grades 11 and 12 or form up to one-half of a student's program in Grades 10 through 12. Although courses may be at any of the three levels of difficulty (except for OACs), the courses in any particular package are generally offered at the same level.

Packages can provide one way to offer a breadth of choice to students when school enrolments are small and two or more secondary schools are within reach of the students. For example, schools having specialized staff and facilities in particular subject areas such as business studies, technological studies, languages, or the arts may offer concentrated packages in their particular subject areas and then open the programs to adjacent schools. Such co-ordination, involving a larger student population, makes it possible to offer packages of courses with concentrations in some subject fields that would not have been possible otherwise.

The success of the school-related package in meeting particular student goals depends strongly on the joint planning of the courses by all teachers who participate in the package. The overall planning of a package should include some provision for students to explore the subject of concentration of a package before they commit themselves to the package. In addition, it should be possible for a student to select a course in a school-related package if space is available without being required to participate in the whole package.

All school-related packages should be fully described in the school course calendar. Where business studies or technological studies forms the area of concentration, successful achievement of the package could lead to an endorsement on the student's transcript (see section 4.14).

School-Related Packages: Academic Focus

School-related packages that focus on an academic subject area may consist of courses that are grouped for one or two years of the student's program. For example, a package consisting of mathematics, physics, chemistry, and electricity courses could offer an applied-science approach to support postsecondary studies in engineering, technology, mathematics, or science fields. A package consisting of mathematics, physics, computer studies, and electronics could

have computer studies as the subject of concentration and could support all of the possible postsecondary studies identified in the previous example, with computer science as an added option.

A package consisting of English, French, Latin, and German would have language as the area of concentration. Family studies, law, and English may form a mutually supportive package; a variety of applications from each subject field in the package could be used to support common themes that would enable students to explore possible career options in the social science field.

In most packages associated with technological studies or business studies, the academic subjects support a vocational subject of concentration. Students should be able to study topics and units in the academic subjects that are specifically related to the subject of concentration. Teaching strategies for such courses may focus on specific applications associated with the subject of concentration.

School-Related Packages: Technological Studies Focus

Any package having a subject of concentration in technological studies should introduce the student to skills and knowledge associated with a range of possible occupations. Such a package can be supportive of entry to the workplace either following graduation from secondary school or after additional study in a postsecondary program.

A package with a concentration in technological studies may begin with an exploration of the subject in Grade 10 and may occupy half of the student's program in Grades 11 and 12. Courses in the area of concentration are offered in each year of the package, with one or more of them being a double-credit course. Related courses have units, topics, assignments, and other activities specifically planned to support the area of concentration and to establish the necessary base of skills and knowledge for further education and training.

A typical package with a technological studies focus may have auto mechanics as the subject of concentration and could include a selection of related courses in small engines, electricity, science (physics), mathematics, accountancy, and English. Students in such programs should be provided with opportunities for work experience or a co-operative education placement with an employer.

School-Related Packages: Business Studies Focus

A business studies package should introduce students to skills and knowledge associated with the business community. These packages should include an opportunity for students to explore the business

system, to acquire keyboarding efficiency, to appreciate technological developments in the business community, to develop communication skills for the business environment, and to branch out into a specific area of business studies supportive of their goals and needs.

The operation of a business studies package or packages within a school should not prevent students from selecting as options individual courses that interest them within the packages.

School-Related Packages: Arts Focus

Courses can be planned with an arts focus and organized into one or more packages. One package, for instance, could combine dramatic arts courses, a physical and health education course with a dance/movement focus, and English literature courses with an expressive focus.

Where there are professional theatre groups or a community theatre movement in the local area, additional options for work experience and community involvement could be built into the package. Another possible package, offered over two or three years, could include visual arts, music, and history. The emphasis could be placed on the interrelatedness of aesthetic, social, cultural, and historical factors.

Visual arts courses may contribute to a variety of packages. One possible combination could concentrate on technological courses in design studies with visual arts, physics, and another technical subject as related courses. Another emphasis could be based on environmental science courses with urban studies, politics, and visual arts as related courses.

5.10 Community-Related Packages

Characteristics of a Community-Related Package

The term *community-related package* identifies a set of courses planned by the school and community to provide students with a curricular emphasis related to the major economic base of the community. Examples of possible emphases are forestry, mining, tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, and business.

The community-related package may be broad and may involve the entire student population of a school in compulsory courses of units, projects, and assignments related to the particular emphasis associated with the community. Other community-related packages may be narrower in emphasis and may be planned for particular groups of students who seek to enter dominant areas of local employment. In this latter case co-operative education or work experience components should be part of the program.

Planning a Community-Related Package

A key characteristic of the community-related package is that each course in the package reflects joint planning by teachers and community representatives to ensure that the course is relevant to both the students and the community. With a vocational package, community representatives should be involved not only in the design but also in the implementation and evaluation of the package.

The community focus may be reflected in both compulsory and optional courses at all levels of difficulty. In each case the core content would remain within the framework of the respective guidelines, but optional units could be adapted to recognize the economic base of the community. Such packages are particularly appropriate where the local industry is based on a natural resource such as forestry or mining that significantly influences the environment, social life, and economic health of the community.

The community-related packages of a more specific vocational nature are very similar to the school-related packages for technological or business studies. The additional feature of such packages is the visible involvement of community representatives in the planning and implementation of the courses. In many cases the package would involve out-of-school co-operative components planned to facilitate the transition of students from school to employment. In such cases in-school components would prepare students for further education and training in the particular employment field.

Where course content in any community-related package deviates from curriculum guidelines, Ministry of Education approval shall be required to establish the program.

5.11 Co-operative Education

Co-operative education is a program that integrates academic study and classroom theory with practical experience in the workplace. Students are placed in supervised training positions with organizations whose field of endeavour is related to their area of study.

The aim of the program, which is built on a partnership between educators and business and industry, is to provide students with training and work experience that will enable them to make informed decisions about their future education and careers as well as help them make the transition from school to the world of work.

Ministry policy regarding the co-operative education program is outlined in the document *Policies and Procedures for Co-operative Education in Ontario Secondary Schools, 1989*.

5.12 Work Experience

Work experience provides the student with a learning opportunity in the workplace, under the supervision of an employer, for a limited period of time within a credit course. As a component of the student's program, work experience provides opportunities to practise and reinforce the vocational skills and technical or business knowledge acquired in school. It also provides students with an orientation to the workplace as well as opportunities for additional career exploration through discussions with experienced workers.

The activities and objectives of the learning experiences in which the student is to be involved must be discussed beforehand by the teacher and employer or supervisor. Evaluation reports on the student's experience are prepared by both the employer and the student.

Every precaution must be taken to assure the safety and protection of students on the job. Safe work stations, special instruction on safe practices, safety clothing, and the provision of Workers' Compensation Board coverage for students are all factors to be considered when out-of-school work experience components are planned.

Work experience components should be planned as part of any course in technological or business studies according to the criteria prescribed for a co-operative education program. This approach establishes a timetable schedule for the out-of-school component in the workplace that does not result in any loss of time from the student's other courses.

When it is not possible to schedule the work experience as an out-of-school component of a course in the student's timetable in a formal way, it may be implemented informally. The student may be excused from his/her program for one or more blocks of time during the school year to acquire the work experience. Efforts should be made by every teacher involved in the student's program both to minimize the effects on the student of missing course work during the work experience period and to maximize the student's learning across all subject fields during the out-of-school period. All such work experience should reflect good planning, and in no case shall it exceed a total of four weeks in any one school year. In this type of work experience the student normally does not receive pay.

While work experience is most beneficial to students in their third or fourth year of secondary school, some students in Grades 9 and 10 may benefit from work experience opportunities to learn about particular occupations in which they have an interest but no training. Such experiences should be planned to help the students become accustomed to a work environment, acquire work-related skills, and learn

more about the kind of career that might be suitable after graduation. The experiences may be implemented informally for periods of one or two weeks, where appropriate. Although the tasks that the student will perform are necessarily limited in scope, the on-the-job learning can increase student interest in related studies at school.

5.13 The Linkage Program

Linkage programs provide for the alignment of subject content in certain secondary school courses with programs offered by the Ministry of Skills Development. Linkage is directed to apprenticeship in trades such as motor vehicle mechanic, general machinist, or hairstylist. Schools participating in the program are provided with a training profile listing specific performance objectives that must be accomplished as part of the course. Linkage program participation shall be recorded in a student's Ontario Student Record.

This alignment of the curriculum makes it possible for secondary school students enrolled in courses in technological studies (associated with the Linkage program) to continue their theoretical training after graduation with a minimum of overlap. The program is aimed at students who intend eventually to enter apprenticeship or enrol as trainees in a modular training program. For example, students enrolled in the Linkage program for "motor vehicle mechanics" who have successfully achieved the learning specified in the basic course of in-school theoretical training for the apprenticeship are normally excused from this course if they become apprenticed after graduation. As apprentices, their first in-school training assignment would then be the intermediate course at a college of applied arts and technology.

All courses offered in secondary schools, whether associated with the Linkage program or not, must be based on the appropriate curriculum guideline issued by the Ministry of Education. The Linkage training profile serves in each case as a resource for the teacher when planning the series of courses required to complete the particular Linkage program. From the point of view of the students it should be clear that courses in the Linkage program:

- enable them to earn OSSD credits while acquiring skill and knowledge in a vocational field;
- enable them to acquire a level of training that is recognized for credit when they enter apprenticeship;
- provide a link between the secondary school and the requirements of employers.

The achievement of the learning objectives specified in the training profile for a particular subject area in the Linkage program may involve courses totalling from four to ten credits over a period of two or more years. Linkage programs can, therefore, be delivered most effectively as a school-related package that includes appropriate mathematics and science courses. Where possible, Grade 12 courses in the Linkage program should also be co-operative in nature and include a closely related out-of-school work component with an employer. Work experience of this type can provide students with opportunities to reinforce the skills and knowledge acquired in school and to develop the appropriate attitudes and knowledge of the workplace that foster a satisfactory transition to work after graduation.

5.14 The Small and/or Remote Secondary School

It is essential for all schools to provide courses for students who will be leaving school to seek employment as well as for those who will be attending post-secondary institutions. However, small secondary schools may experience difficulty in providing a full range of courses to meet the needs of all of their students. Co-operative arrangements among boards and schools are therefore essential if small secondary schools are to provide sufficient course options for their students. Sharing is necessary to make the most efficient use of resources, such as laboratories, libraries, and technical facilities.

Unlike many small secondary schools, remote small secondary schools are prevented, by virtue of their geographic isolation, from sharing and co-operating with neighbouring secondary schools. They also lack the physical and human resources found in larger schools, systems, and communities. In these cases the sharing of facilities and personnel between elementary and secondary schools within a board should be especially encouraged. Such sharing could involve the use of the same physical plant, office personnel, and special equipment.

Some possible strategies to alleviate the problems of providing more program options and flexibility in these two categories of schools could include:

- providing opportunities for staff to develop qualifications in several different areas;
- offering courses at more than one level of difficulty or grade within the same class (see section 5.5);

- supplementing the school program with correspondence courses, films, videotapes, and computer-assisted instruction;
- developing closed-circuit TV or two-way communication between schools;
- using continuing education programs to expand the range of subjects;
- teaching some courses in alternate years;
- promoting differentiated staffing, such as the use of teachers' aides and volunteers;
- considering co-operative education, work experience, and community-involvement programs;
- implementing expanded use of independent and private-study methods of learning.

Some remote small secondary schools may have difficulty providing for a particular compulsory credit requirement. To ensure that all students may qualify for the OSSD or Certificate of Education, principals of remote small secondary schools may need to apply the substitute credit clause described in section 4.10, note (d).

5.15 Specialized Schools

Some school boards may wish to establish secondary schools organized around specific activities such as the performing arts, special vocations, languages, pure and applied sciences, and technological studies or business studies. As well, as enrolments decline, boards may find the need to offer particular programs only at certain schools. Small-enrolment programs, such as some languages, may be offered in one school but serve several schools. However, a secondary school should not specialize to the point where it cannot offer the full range of required courses necessary for a student to obtain an OSSD.

5.16 Public Alternative Schools

Public alternative schools and programs often are developed in response to needs expressed within the local community. They provide another option for students, parents, and teachers and, frequently, opportunities for individualization, smaller classes, and extensive use of the community as a learning facility. By their nature alternative schools differ not only from conventional schools, but also from each other. It is necessary to articulate the specific objectives of each such school.

The special and useful role of public alternative schools and programs should be examined by school boards to determine whether there is a need for such

schools within the board's jurisdiction. The development of an alternative school or program should be preceded by a study that examines factors such as educational need, acceptance by and interest of students, location of the school or program, nature of the curriculum, staff assignment and training, costs, and criteria for ongoing evaluation of the purposes and achievement of such a school or program.

5.17 Co-instructional Programs

The term *co-instructional* refers to the part of the curriculum that includes intramural and interschool programs, school clubs, recreational activities, and extra-curricular activities. The term *curriculum* encompasses all learning experiences that are provided for students under the auspices of the school and the school board. It includes both the instructional and co-instructional programs.

Students, even within the same chronological age group, show wide differences in social, emotional, physical, and mental maturity. To meet the needs of a wide variety of students whose abilities and interests vary greatly, the school should attempt to provide many different kinds of programs and activities. The co-instructional programs provide students with opportunities for enrichment, the further development of skills, knowledge, and attitudes acquired in the instructional program, the development of personal skills of socialization and independence, the realization of their potential in a less formal setting, and the practice of decision-making and the handling of responsibility. These activities allow for the development of differing kinds of relationships, in a very positive manner, between teachers and students and among different groups of students.

Each school should establish a mechanism to assess on a regular basis its needs for co-instructional activities, bearing in mind the widely varying abilities and interests of the student population, the need for equal opportunity for male and female students, and staff aptitudes and interests. Students and members of the community should be involved in this assessment.

All of these factors emphasize the need to draw on community resources in order to provide a rich environment of experiences and opportunities in the co-instructional program. However, the legal implication of bringing parents and other adult members of the community into the school to assist in the co-instructional program should be understood. The Education Act sets out the duties and powers of a school board in regard to persons who volunteer to serve without remuneration in the schools.

6. Ways of Earning Credits

6.1 Guideline Courses

In most cases students will earn credits in day-school courses (including co-operative education programs) based on the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education (see section 4.7).

6.2 Credits for Elementary School Students

In accordance with the concept of continuous progress in education, an elementary school principal, or the principal of a private school offering elementary school programs, and the principal of a publicly supported school offering secondary school programs, or the principal of an inspected private school offering secondary school programs, may decide that it is appropriate for certain elementary or private school students to enrol in one or more secondary school courses. Where prior permission has been granted by the appropriate supervisory officer(s), the principal of the publicly supported school offering secondary school programs or of the inspected private school offering secondary school programs shall assume the responsibility for evaluating the student's achievements and for granting credits.

Because extended and immersion programs in French as a second language are distinct programs that differ significantly from core French, students shall not be granted secondary school *core* French credits for work taken in extended or immersion French programs in elementary school. Some elementary school students in core, extended, or immersion French programs may, however, take secondary school core, extended, or immersion French credit courses where prior permission has been granted by local supervisory officers and where the principal of the school offering the programs agrees. These courses should be of the same type as the course in which they are enrolled in elementary school.

6.3 Independent Study

The principal should make opportunities for independent study available to students in order to provide a wider range of program choices in the school. In any given course there is no restriction on the number of periods that a teacher may permit for independent study. In this method of study the teacher

is responsible for assigning components of the course, suggesting available resources, evaluating the achievement of the student, and ensuring that the total work involved is equivalent to that which is expected in a course with a scheduled time of a minimum of 110 hours.

6.4 Private Study

A private-study student is one who takes through private study one or more courses for which attendance at the school is not required. A student can qualify for private study because he/she is deemed to have a valid reason for not attending classes or because the school does not offer the course(s) but is willing to monitor the student's progress and evaluate his/her work. At the discretion of the principal, a day-school student may also be a private-study student for one or more of his/her credit courses.

Credits may be earned for diploma purposes through private study. A person who wishes to qualify as a private-study student should submit an application as early in the school year as possible, normally not later than the first school day in February if the student intends to complete the course by June 30. The application shall be submitted to the principal of the secondary school at which the student wishes to be considered a private-study student.

When a private-study student has obtained satisfactory standing, the principal shall record the standing in the Ontario Student Record.

6.5 Independent Learning Centre (Correspondence Courses)

Secondary school credit courses designed primarily for persons working independently towards the OSSD and non-credit adult basic education courses are available through the Independent Learning Centre (ILC). These courses, as well as services such as counselling and telephone tutoring, are provided free of charge to the residents of Ontario. The delivery of ILC programs is primarily through correspondence courses. For the most recent information concerning eligibility, enrolment procedures, and course offerings, reference should be made to the current edition of the *Independent Learning Centre Student Guide*.

6.6 Continuing Education

Continuing education is defined as the provision of learning opportunities for part-time or short-term learners following or outside formal full-time study. This provision consists of credit and non-credit offerings other than those courses taught during the defined school day in elementary and secondary schools. The audience for continuing education is predominantly persons over the age of fifteen who have been out of school for a year or more, although students enrolled in secondary schools may also enrol in continuing education courses under defined circumstances.

The Ministry of Education supports the provision of:

- credit courses for adults and secondary school students in evening classes, in summer school, and in daytime continuing education. The variety of credit courses is described by ministry guidelines;
- adult basic education including adult basic literacy, citizenship and language training, and courses in English as a second language or French as a second language for adults with a facility in neither of these languages.

In addition, persons who wish to return to school on a full-time or part-time basis may receive equivalency credits as outlined in section 6.14.

Although the main purpose for providing continuing education through evening and day classes is to benefit adults who have left school, another purpose is to accommodate some day-school students who have special curriculum needs.

A student who attends a day school may be considered for admission to a continuing education class for diploma credit after presentation of:

- a statement signed by the day-school principal indicating:
 - a) that there has been consultation with the student regarding the proposed enrolment in evening classes; and
 - b) that a student who is enrolled for credit in the same course in day school has the day-school principal's permission to enrol in the evening-class course; and
- evidence of parental approval for those students who have not attained the age of majority.

This provision does not preclude the possibility of a student's auditing either a day-school or an evening-school course as a supplement to the course he/she is taking for credit.

The student's final standing in a credit course shall be reported to the principal of the day school and recorded in the Ontario Student Record along with other courses taken in that school.

The scheduled time in any continuing education course taken for credit shall not be less than 90 hours. It is the responsibility of the principal of the continuing education program to ensure that each continuing education course is planned to contain the quantity of work that would ordinarily be completed in a minimum of 110 hours of scheduled time in a day-school program. Otherwise, fractional credits shall be awarded as outlined in section 4.5.

Continuing education is provided on the assumption that people wish to engage in purposeful learning activities throughout their lifetimes. The activities described above ensure the availability of opportunities for both day-school students and adults of the school community.

6.7 Summer Schools

Establishing Summer Schools

Summer schools may be established by school boards. The chief education officer of the board concerned shall notify the Ministry of Education through the June board report of the subjects that it intends to offer in its summer school program. The terms of admission to a summer school shall be determined by the board that operates the summer school.

A summer school may not begin until after the last school day in the school year nor extend beyond the first school day of the following school year.

Types of Summer School Courses

Secondary school courses offered by summer schools for credit may be of three types:

- credit courses that students have not previously studied;
- credit courses that are designed for students who have taken the same courses in day or evening classes during the regular school year but who have not obtained standing or who wish to improve their standing in such courses;
- transition courses, for fractional credit, that allow students to move from one level of difficulty to another.

Length of Summer School Courses

Principals shall ensure that, to qualify for diploma credit, courses not previously taken by students fulfil the same credit requirements as courses offered during the regular school year. This includes the requirement that each credit course offered be scheduled for a minimum of 110 hours. Summer courses that do not satisfy the full-credit definition shall be offered as fractional credits except for OACs. However, no

fractional credit less than one-quarter shall be assigned to any such course (see section 4.5).

Credit courses that are repeated by students who did not previously obtain satisfactory standing in them, or who wish to upgrade their standing in the same course, need not be scheduled for the full time stated in the credit definition. In no case, however, shall the amount of scheduled time be less than one-half the total time provided for the course during the regular session. Standing for students in these courses shall be established by taking the higher of the standings obtained in summer school and in the regular day school, not by averaging the two. Students who take a course during the school year and repeat the same course at summer school shall receive only one credit for that course.

Recording Summer School Standings

On or before the last day of August, a statement of the standing obtained in summer school courses shall be issued to the student by the principal of the summer school. Where the course carries certificate or diploma credit, the standing shall also be reported to the principal of the school that the student last attended. This standing shall be accepted by the principal of the school last attended as if it had been included in the student's report and shall be recorded along with the standing in courses taken during the regular school year.

6.8 Private Schools

Credits may be earned for diploma purposes through attendance at private schools that are inspected and in which the quality of teaching and the work of the students have been deemed satisfactory by the Ministry of Education.

6.9 Non-Guideline Courses

Non-guideline courses are courses that meet educational needs not met by a curriculum guideline. Such courses may be offered for either or both of the following reasons:

- to accommodate genuine local needs of a particular school or region or exceptional pupil that cannot be met through the use of a guideline course;
- to permit pilot projects in curriculum development that will benefit the students (projects that are innovative and for which there are no provincial guidelines).

All non-guideline courses require approval by the ministry for purposes of diploma credit. Such approval shall be obtained before a non-guideline course is offered. Before approval is requested, careful

consideration should be given to the availability of staff, facilities, financial resources, and instructional materials, as well as the possible reallocation of existing resources within the school. Prior approval by the ministry is also required for the textbooks to be used in connection with these courses. The following conditions pertain to all requests to offer non-guideline courses:

- The chief education officer of a school board shall send a request for approval to the regional director of education, along with an outline describing the studies to be undertaken, the rationale for offering the course (including specifying the educational need that is not met by any curriculum guideline), the grade in which the course will be offered, the course objectives, the evaluation procedures to be used, the level of difficulty, the credit value, the textbooks and reference materials proposed for use, and the intended date of introduction of the course.
- Requests for approval must be sent well in advance of the proposed introduction of the course.
- Approval, when given, applies only to a specific course at the school or schools named in the letter of approval.
- The period of time for which an approval is granted will be stated in the letter of approval.
- The principal of the school for which the course is approved shall assume supervisory responsibility even when all or a significant portion of the course is conducted at some location other than the school premises and instruction is given by persons who are not on the teaching staff of the school.
- A credit for a non-guideline course cannot be substituted for a compulsory credit.
- Approvals for non-guideline courses shall be terminated with:
 - a) the publishing of a guideline in the area covered by the approved non-guideline course;
 - b) the conclusion that after evaluation or review the course no longer meets an educational need.
- Non-guideline OACs are not permitted.

6.10 Exemptions From Non-Guideline-Course Approval

The two types of courses that are exempt from the non-guideline-course approval procedures are extended and immersion French, except for OACs, and religious education in Roman Catholic separate schools. Such courses are to be established under the following conditions:

- The course of study shall be approved by the school board, be kept on file, and be made available as requested by the Ministry of Education.

- The course development, instruction, evaluation, and related learning materials shall be subject to the supervision of the principal, as in any other course.
- Such matters as adherence to the definition of a credit, scheduled time, determination of the level of difficulty, and the recording of student achievement shall be consistent with the policies outlined in this document for all credit courses.

Extended and Immersion French

Since there is sufficient research and experience at hand to indicate that language learning is favourably enhanced through extended or immersion approaches, Grade 9 to 11 courses in French as a second language within extended or immersion French programs are exempt from non-guideline-course approval. The OACs must be based on the guideline *French As a Second Language, Ontario Academic Courses, 1986*. Other courses, such as those in mathematics, geography, and family studies, that are taught in French to English-speaking students and that are based on ministry guidelines are considered to be guideline courses.

Religious Education in Roman Catholic Separate Schools

Credit courses in religious education in Grades 9 and 10 of Roman Catholic separate schools are exempt from non-guideline-course approval provided that:

- such courses are developed by a school, a group of schools, or all applicable schools under the jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic separate school board; and
- each student earns no more than one credit in religious education in each of Grades 9 and 10.

6.11 External Courses in Music

The principal of a secondary school may count the certificates listed in appendix C, as specified, for a maximum of two credits towards the OSSD. (See section 4.11.) The principal will report these external courses in music as credits in advanced level courses.

6.12 Credit for Driver-Training Courses

In secondary school basic level programs of one or more years' duration in which driving a vehicle forms an integral part of the program under study, full or partial credit may be awarded for a driver-education course offered as part of such programs according to the following schedule:

- one-half credit for a course of 60 hours' duration (in-class and in-car)

- one credit for a course of 110-20 hours' duration (in-class and in-car)

Driver-education courses for students enrolled in other types of programs may continue to be offered as non-credit courses as part of the continuing education program.

6.13 Transfer or Change of Course

Whenever students are allowed to transfer or change courses during the year, every effort should be made to retain the coherence of their programs as well as the other characteristics involved in the initial planning. As with original course selections, all transfers or changes of course by students under the age of majority must also receive parental approval.

Where a student transfers from one secondary school to another secondary school, the principal of the receiving school may award credit for work started in the previous school but completed in the receiving school. Where this work cannot be completed in the receiving school, the receiving principal may, after consultation with the principal of the sending school, award a fractional credit. This fractional credit shall be not less than one-quarter credit. The receiving principal may delay the awarding of some or all of these credits until the student has completed his/her year.

6.14 Equivalent Standing for Mature Students

OSSD for Mature Students

Equivalent credits towards the OSSD may be granted to mature students who have returned to day school, are enrolled in classes in continuing education, have obtained private-study status, or are enrolled in the Independent Learning Centre.

Mature students who have previously accumulated fewer than twenty-six credits may wish to take advantage of any of the provisions for equivalent-credit allowances stated below. Such students shall not be awarded the OSSD until they have earned, subsequent to becoming mature students, at least four Ontario credits from the Senior Division. Mature students who have previously accumulated twenty-six or more credits towards the OSSD shall complete the required number of credits to bring their total up to a minimum of thirty credits before they qualify for the diploma. In applying the criteria governing equivalent-credit allowances, a principal may consider it desirable to delay assigning some or all of the equivalent credits

until students have completed one or more courses normally taken in the Senior Division. The principal shall determine which compulsory courses (if any) must still be completed by the student to earn an OSSD.

Equivalent-Credit Allowances

In addition to diploma credits already accumulated by students – credits for which transcripts can be produced – the following equivalent-credit allowances may be given to raise the total number of accumulated credits for mature students to a maximum of twenty-six credits:

- *Maturity allowance.* A maturity allowance of up to twelve credits may be given on the basis of age and length of time out of school. This provision recognizes that experience in the adult world can produce competence and understanding equivalent for some purposes, and to varying degrees, to that which might have been gained through formal education. Because maturity is not necessarily proportionate to chronological age, the decision regarding how many of the twelve credits will be allotted to any individual mature student is left to the principal, who will judge each case according to its merits.
- *Equivalent-education allowance.* Allowances may also be given to mature students for individual courses successfully completed but not normally identified as secondary education, if they are considered acceptable by the principal and if appropriate transcript information is available. Each course containing work that would normally be completed after a minimum of 110 hours of instruction may be considered to equal one equivalent credit. Courses that are considered to be postsecondary, for example, courses that normally qualify for college or university credit, do not qualify for credits towards the OSSD.
- *Apprenticeship-training allowance.* Two equivalent credits may be allotted for the successful completion of each period of an apprenticeship-training program under authority of the Apprenticeship and Tradesmen's Qualification Act, *Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1980*, chapter 24. In a modular training program, two equivalent credits may be allotted for each six units taken over and above the prescribed academic entry requirement of the particular training program authorized under the act cited above.

The equivalent credits assigned under this section shall be recorded as such on the Ontario Student Transcript.

Stipulations Governing Credit Requirements

When a principal has determined how many credits a mature student has yet to earn towards a diploma, the student should be given guidance regarding the credit courses that are to be included in his/her program. After judging each case on its merits, the principal may stipulate general requirements for earning the diploma. A ruling of this nature should be given to the student in writing, with a copy placed in the student's record folder. Any ruling should not be unduly burdensome on the student, but should be made in his/her best interests.

7. Student Achievement, Evaluation, Attendance, and Discipline

7.1 Achievement

Education is a process of learning that requires continuity in and exposure to learning experiences. Students must learn to work not only as individuals but also with others. This involves the student in listening, co-operating, sharing, interacting, and experiencing mutual evaluation. Students should be able, singly and in groups, to investigate, analyse, synthesize, generalize, and make occasional intuitive leaps in the pursuit of knowledge. Students and teachers should engage in educational processes that are mutually instructive, creative, and satisfying. The ability to work with and for others – both adults and peers – is an essential ingredient of the learning process. Regular attendance on the part of students is an important component of this process and of the evaluation of student achievement.

7.2 Evaluation of Student Achievement

Evaluation is not an end in itself; it is rather a part of the learning process for both the student and the teacher. Formative evaluation occurs during the course of learning; evaluation of student progress is made from the beginning of a program or unit of study until the end of it. Formative evaluation is a tool designed to keep both students and teachers aware of objectives to be achieved and to inform them of progress. When progress falters, a diagnosis is made to determine whether the program, the learning materials, the teaching strategies, or the student's own approach to the subject needs to be adjusted. If a pretest indicates that a student or group of students already has mastered much of the material intended to be taught, the teacher may then consider teaching only the unknown skills or concepts, extending the unit, or enriching the unit.

Summative evaluation takes place at the end of a unit or period of time. The purpose is to judge the student's achievement in relation to the stated objectives of the course. However, no matter what evaluation processes are used within individual courses to assess a student's achievement, it is still necessary for the principal and staff to have a method

of monitoring the overall progress of that student through school. Once an individual student's progress and achievement have been evaluated, they should be recorded as clearly and completely as possible. The data of scholastic achievement shall be recorded on the Ontario Student Transcript.

Procedures for evaluating student progress should be sufficiently varied to meet the requirements of different individuals and groups of students, different courses, the three levels of difficulty, and a variety of learning environments. For most purposes, it is recognized that the most effective form of evaluation is the application of the teacher's professional judgement to a wide range of information gathered through observation and assessment. In order to help teachers evaluate student achievement, curriculum guidelines will describe appropriate evaluation techniques.

Among the most important recipients of information about student progress are parents and guardians. The traditional way to communicate this information to parents has been through the report card. Student progress should be reported regularly in a written report. Parent-teacher conferences should form part of the reporting process. Parents should also be made aware of the school's promotion policy, the criteria used by the school in evaluating student progress, any policy governing exemption from examinations, and the relative weight of term work and examinations. One way of informing parents is through the school course calendar (see section 4.15).

7.3 Attendance

Regular attendance on the part of students is vital to the process of learning. Normally the plan of a lesson employs a variety of processes, including discussion among the students themselves. A unit of study usually involves the development of a sequence of related understandings. When the processes and content of learning are disrupted by irregular attendance, both the individual student and his/her classmates suffer a loss of experiences that cannot be entirely regained. Students who habitually miss class will suffer in the evaluation process because their participation and achievement cannot be fully assessed. Expectations of participation, achievement, and attendance must be realistically related to the objectives of the course and must be clearly communicated to all students and their parents. Students of compulsory school age who do not attend school regularly are reported to the school board attendance counsellor so that the reason or excuse for their absence can be determined.

To encourage regular attendance, the principal and staff should:

- inform both the student and his/her parents at the outset of each course of the extent to which participation and attendance will be components of the evaluation process;
- ensure that the school's policy on attendance is communicated to all concerned;
- meet with the student and his/her parents where, in the principal's judgement, irregular attendance is jeopardizing the successful completion of the course;
- identify for both the student and his/her parents the potential consequences of irregular attendance and the alternatives that could be considered to promote a change in behaviour that would contribute to a successful program of learning.

Where attendance has been identified as an essential component of a course and where a student, with his/her parents, has been appropriately counselled and provided with support and direction to promote regular attendance in the course, and where the student is still unwilling to attend regularly, such a student will normally fail to achieve credit for the course.

7.4 Code of Student Behaviour

The regulations made under the Education Act state the requirements for pupils regarding discipline, attendance, and general deportment. Since the regulations set requirements in broad terms only, each secondary school shall enunciate a clear code of student behaviour developed co-operatively with the help of parents, students, and staff for the approval of the board. This code should emphasize a sense of self-worth and self-discipline in students and should clearly outline realistic and effective consequences for failure to meet its standards.

If it has not already done so, the school board should assist this process by developing a general set of guidelines dealing with student conduct within which the individual secondary school shall develop its code of student behaviour.

Appendix A

Glossary of Terms Used in This Document

In order for effective communication on a province-wide basis to take place, it is desirable for all concerned to have a clear understanding of the meaning of certain terms and to ensure that they are used uniformly by the Ministry of Education and all school boards in Ontario. It is recommended that the following glossary of terms be recognized provincially and locally and be implemented in curriculum documents and related memoranda.

Co-instructional program The part of the curriculum that includes intramural and interschool programs, clubs, and recreational activities.

Community-related package A package of courses related to a unique need or feature in the community around the school.

Compulsory credit A credit that is earned for the successful completion of a compulsory course. Compulsory courses are those that, as directed by the Minister, must be included in a student's program towards the earning of a certificate or a diploma. (See also *Elective credit*.)

Continuing education The provision of learning^f opportunities for part-time or short-term learners following or outside formal full-time study.

Course A body of knowledge related to a subject, where "knowledge" is taken to include such activities as acquiring information, understanding concepts, mastering skills, utilizing processes, gaining experiences, and developing attitudes. A course may have a subject title such as "Biology" or some other title such as "World Religions" and is normally offered within a period of a year or less (see *Subject*).

Course calendar The name given to the document prepared by a secondary school to inform students and their parents of the courses available in the school.

Credit A credit is granted to a student by a principal in recognition of the successful completion of a course for which a minimum of 110 hours has been scheduled.

Curriculum All student experiences, both instructional and co-instructional, for which the school is responsible.

Elective credit A credit that is earned for the successful completion of an elective course. Elective courses are those selected by a student from available courses apart from his/her compulsory courses. (See also *Compulsory credit*.)

Exceptional pupil A pupil "whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical, or multiple exceptionalities are such that he [or she] is considered to need placement in a special education program by a committee [a special education Identification, Placement, and Review Committee] of a board,

- i) of which he [or she] is a resident pupil,
- ii) that admits or enrolls the pupil other than pursuant to an agreement with another board for the provision of education, or
- iii) to which the cost of education in respect of the pupil is payable by the Minister." (Education Act, *Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1980*, Chapter 129, subsection 1(1), paragraph 20)

French-as-a-second-language programs

- **Core.** A program with a minimum of 60 hours and a maximum of 120 hours of instruction in the subject of French in any grade of the sequence.
- **Extended.** A program with at least 120 hours of instruction in the subject of French plus at least one other complete subject taught in French for a full year, but amounting to a total of not more than 404 hours of instruction.
- **Immersion, partial.** A program with 405 hours of instruction in at least one of its years, but not more than 689 hours.
- **Immersion, full.** A program with 690 hours or more of instruction in at least one of its years.

Independent study An arrangement by which a student is excused from attending some or all classes in a course in order to study independently, but under the supervision of the teacher.

Level In reference to courses offered in secondary schools, the term *level* shall mean "level of difficulty". Where circumstances permit and where it is considered desirable, courses should be offered at one or more levels, and such levels shall be named the "basic level", the "general level", and the "advanced level".

Mature student For purposes of determining further required credits for a diploma, a mature student is defined as a student who is at least eighteen years of age and who has not attended day school for a period of at least one year.

Non-guideline course A course that is not developed from a ministry curriculum guideline and therefore does not reflect the balance and intent of such a guideline. If offered for credit, such a course requires ministry approval prior to implementation.

Ontario Academic Course (OAC) A prescriptive, provincially designed university-entrance course.

Prerequisite course A course is designated as a prerequisite for a subsequent course only if it is absolutely essential for the successful understanding of the subsequent course. Prerequisite courses are only established by ministry curriculum guidelines.

Private-study student A student who is not required to attend regular classes in a course or program, but who is an approved candidate working towards a diploma or certificate and for whom a day-school principal has arranged a process of evaluation.

Program A set of one or more courses. Examples include a student program, a school program, an English program, a school-related program, and a summer school program.

Related package A particular set of courses grouped together for a specific curriculum emphasis. Each course within the package contains one or more components that are directed towards the particular emphasis.

Resource-based programs Planned educational programs that actively involve students in the meaningful use of a wide range of appropriate print, non-print, and human resources.

Scheduled time The time requirement of a minimum of 110 hours, as mentioned in the definition of "credit". "Scheduled time" does not include additional time spent on a course, including, for example, time normally spent on work at home.

School-related package A package of courses peculiar to the school and focusing on a particular subject area such as the arts, business studies, electronics, and data processing.

Sex equity Equal treatment of females and males.

Shall, should, may In reference to policy statements:

- *shall* indicates that which must be implemented;
- *should* indicates that which is strongly recommended;
- *may* indicates that which is optional.

Special education program In respect of an exceptional pupil, an educational program that is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation. It must include a plan containing specific objectives and an outline of educational services that meets the needs of the exceptional pupil.

Special education services Facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program.

Student A person enrolled in a school program. Students should never be designated by level, for example, a "basic level student"; only courses are said to be at a particular level.

Subject A specified discipline or branch of learning. Examples include fairly broad categories such as science or more specifically defined categories such as biology, chemistry, and physics. A student may take subjects or courses in different grades at the same time.

Transition course When a student wishes to move from one level of difficulty to another level of difficulty in the same subject, a short transition course for fractional credit may be offered. This transition course will consist of those topics that were not included in the completed course but are considered essential for success in the course to be taken.

Appendix B

Compulsory Credits

The courses in the compulsory subjects are to be based on the following guidelines:

Arts

- Dramatic Arts, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1981*
- Dramatic Arts, OAC, 1986*
- Music, Intermediate Division, 1972*
- Music, Senior Division, 1977*
- Visual Arts, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1986*

Business Studies

- Business Studies: Accounting, Intermediate and Senior Divisions and OAC, 1987*
- Business Studies: Business English, Senior Division, 1987*
- Business Studies: Consumer Studies, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1987*
- Business Studies: Economics, Intermediate and Senior Divisions and OAC, 1986*
- Business Studies: Entrepreneurship Studies, Senior Division, 1989*
- Business Studies: Integrated Business Programs, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1987*
- Business Studies: Keyboarding, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1987*
- Business Studies: Marketing, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1987*
- Business Studies: Organizational Studies, Senior Division and OAC, 1987*
- Business Studies: Policy for Program Planning and Delivery, Intermediate and Senior Divisions and OACs, 1986*
- Business Studies: System Support Programs, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1987*
- Computer Studies, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1983 (Data processing courses only)*
- History and Contemporary Studies, Part A: Policy and Program Considerations, Intermediate and Senior Divisions and OACs, 1986*
- History and Contemporary Studies, Part C: Senior Division, Grades 11 and 12, 1987 (Law courses only)*
- History and Contemporary Studies, Part D: OACs, 1987 (Law courses only)*
- Mathematics, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part Two: Grades 7–8 and Grades 9–12, General Level, 1985 (Mathematics for Business and Consumers)*

Canadian Geography

- Geography, Intermediate Division, 1977 (Valid until September 1, 1990)*
- Geography, Part A: Policy and Program Expectations, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1988*
- Geography, Part B: Planning at the Local Level, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1988*
- Geography, Part C: The Intermediate Division Program, 1988*

Canadian History

- History and Contemporary Studies, Part A: Policy and Program Considerations, Intermediate and Senior Divisions and OACs, 1986*
- History and Contemporary Studies, Part B: Intermediate Division, 1986 (Contemporary Canada: Life in the Twentieth Century)*

English

- Business Studies: Business English, Senior Division, 1987*
- Business Studies: Policy for Program Planning and Delivery, Intermediate and Senior Divisions and OACs, 1986*
- English As a Second Language and English Skills Development, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1988*
- English, Intermediate and Senior Divisions (Grades 7–12), 1987*
- English, OACs, 1984*

French

- French As a Second Language, OACs, 1986*
- French, Core Programs, 1980*

Mathematics

- Mathematics, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part One: Grades 9–12, Basic Level, 1985*
- Mathematics, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part Two: Grades 7–8 and Grades 9–12, General Level, 1985*
- Mathematics, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part Three: Grades 7–8 and Grades 9–12, Advanced Level, and OACs, 1985*

Physical and Health Education

- Physical and Health Education, Intermediate Division, 1978*
- Physical and Health Education, Senior Division, 1975*
- Supplement to Physical and Health Education, Senior Division, 1975*

Science

- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 1: Program Outline and Policy, 1987*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 2: Science (Grades 7 and 8), 1987*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 3: Science (Grades 9 and 10, General Level), 1987*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 4: Science (Grades 9 and 10, Advanced Level), 1987*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 5: Science (Grades 9 and 10, Basic Level), 1987*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 6: Science (Grades 11 and 12, Basic Level), 1988*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 7: Environmental Science (Grades 10 and 12, General Level), 1988*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 8: Environmental Science (Grades 10 and 12, Advanced Level), 1988*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 9: Applied Biology and Applied Chemistry (Grade 11, General Level), 1988*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 10: Applied Physics and Technological Science (Grade 12, General Level), 1989*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 11: Geology (Grade 12, General and Advanced Levels), 1988*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 12: Biology (Grade 11, Advanced Level, and the OAC), 1987*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 13: Chemistry (Grade 11, Advanced Level, and the OAC), 1987*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 14: Physics (Grade 12, Advanced Level, and the OAC), 1988*
- Science, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part 15: Science in Society (OAC), 1988*

Senior Social Science (Senior Division courses only)

- Business Studies: Consumer Studies, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1987*
- Business Studies: Economics, Intermediate and Senior Divisions and OAC, 1986*
- Business Studies: Policy for Program Planning and Delivery, Intermediate and Senior Divisions and OACs, 1986*
- Classical Civilization, OAC, 1987*
- Classical Studies, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1976 (Part B – Classical Civilizations)*
- Family Studies, Intermediate and Senior Divisions and OAC, 1987*
- Fashion Arts, Senior Division, 1989*
- Food and Nutrition Sciences, Senior Division, 1989*
- Geography, Senior Division, 1978 (Valid until September 1, 1990)*

Geography, Part A: Policy and Program Expectations, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1988

Geography, Part B: Planning at the Local Level, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1988

Geography, Part D: The Senior Division Program, Revised Courses, 1988

Geography, Part E: The Senior Division Program, New Courses, 1988

Geography, Part F: The Senior Division Program, OACs, 1988

Guidance, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1984

History and Contemporary Studies, Part A: Policy and Program Considerations, Intermediate and Senior Divisions and OACs, 1986

History and Contemporary Studies, Part C: Senior Division, Grades 11 and 12, 1987

History and Contemporary Studies, Part D: OACs, 1987

People of Native Ancestry, Senior Division, 1981

Personal Life Management, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1985

Physical and Health Education, Senior Division, 1975 (Classification B: health education courses only)

Urban Studies, Senior Division, 1971 (Valid until September 1, 1990)

Technological Studies

Technological Studies, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part A: Policy for Program Planning, 1985

Technological Studies, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part B: 1. Transportation Grouping, 1986; 2. Construction Grouping, 1986; 3. Electrical Grouping, 1985; 4. Food Services Grouping, 1986; 5. Graphics Grouping, 1986; 6. Horticulture Grouping, 1987; 8. Manufacturing Grouping, 1986; 9. Personal Services Grouping, 1986; 10. Textiles Grouping, 1986

Technological Studies, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Part C: OACs, 1987

Note: The following technological studies guidelines are valid until September 1, 1991:

Agricultural Mechanics RP.27A, 1966

Elements of Construction Technology, Senior Division, 1970 and Supplement, 1970

Elements of Electrical Technology S.27B, 1969 and Supplement, 1969

Elements of Mechanical Technology S.27D, 1968 and Supplement, 1969

Graphic Arts, Senior Division, 1972

Industrial Arts, I. and S.19, 1962

Industrial Physics S.27C (11-12), 1967

Technical Subjects RP.27, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1963 (Senior Division courses only)

Appendix C

Music Certificates Accepted for Credits

1. The following certificates may be counted for a maximum of one non-OAC credit towards the OSSD in addition to any other non-OAC music credits earned in the school:

- Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto:
Grade VIII Practical and Grade II Rudiments
- Western Ontario Conservatory, London:
Grade VIII Practical and Grade II Rudiments
- Any conservatory of music in the Province of Quebec that grants the following:
Collegial I Practical and Collegial I Theory
- Western Board of Music, University of Alberta, Edmonton:
Grade VIII Practical and Grade IV Theory
- Trinity College of Music, London, England:
Grade VII Practical and Grade V Theory
- Royal Schools of Music, London, England:
Grade VII Practical and Grade VI Theory

2. The following certificates may be counted for a maximum of one OAC credit towards the OSSD in addition to a maximum of one other OAC credit in music earned in the school:

- Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto:
Grade IX Practical and Grade III Harmony
- Western Ontario Conservatory, London:
Grade IX Practical and Grade III Harmony
- Any conservatory of music in the Province of Quebec that grants the following:
Collegial II Practical and Collegial II Theory
- Western Board of Music, University of Alberta, Edmonton:
Grade IX Practical and Grade V Theory
- Trinity College of Music, London, England:
Grade VIII Practical and Grade VI Theory
- Royal Schools of Music, London, England:
Grade VIII Practical and Grade VIII Theory

Notes

- a) The term *practical* refers to any musical instrument that is examined, including the voice, but does not include speech arts.
- b) The mark credited to the student is calculated by averaging the marks that the student has earned in practical *and* rudiments *or* theory *or* harmony, as the case may be.
- c) A music credit obtained through a certificate granted by a conservatory of music may *not* be used to meet the compulsory credit requirement in the arts.

Appendix D

Equivalent Diploma Requirements

Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)

	Situations in which the student has normally completed:				
	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	more than Grade 11
Number of years successfully completed in a secondary school program	0	1	2	3	more than 3
Minimum number of credits still to be earned towards the OSSD	30	22	14	7	4
Number of <i>compulsory</i> credits to be earned in the Senior Division	English/ français (Senior)		2	1	0
	social science (Senior)		1	0	0

This table is to be used at the discretion of the principal provided that the following requirements are met: A student who has no previous Ontario credits but who has successfully completed more than three years of secondary school education is required to earn a minimum of four Senior Division credits before being recommended for the OSSD. However, if a student has successfully completed more than three years of secondary school education and returns to the Ontario educational system, having previously earned at least three Ontario credits, he/she may qualify for the OSSD by completing a minimum of one Senior Division credit.

Appendix E

Summary of Requirements for the Secondary School Graduation Diploma (SSGD)

(Valid until August 31, 1989)

Minimum number of credits	School year in which the student began the first year of a secondary school program				Notes
	1974-75 1975-76 1976-77	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80 1980-81 1981-82 1982-83 1983-84	a
for an SSGD including, within this total, the following:	27	27	27	27	b
from each area of study	3	3	3	3	c
from English studies	4	2	2		d
from Canadian studies	2				e
in required subjects:					f
<i>Intermediate Division</i>					
English (or anglais)		2	2	2	g
mathematics		2	2	2	g
science		1	1	1	g
Canadian history			1	1	g
Canadian geography			1	1	g
Canadian history OR Canadian history and Canadian geography		{ 2 OR 1 each			g
<i>Senior Division</i>					
English (or anglais)				2	g

Notes*

- In this document the school year is considered as beginning on September 1 of one year and ending on August 31 of the following year.
- Students should be encouraged to enrich their programs by taking more than the minimum twenty-seven credit courses.
- See section 4.1 for a description of these areas of study.
- See appendix B.
- See appendix C.
- For a modification of the required-subjects policy for students in occupational programs, see section 8.1.
- See appendix A.

*All references in these notes are to *Circular H.S. 1, 1979-81*.

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